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Published by
MediaFriends srl
Viale Papiniano, 49
20123 Milano - Italy
www.tattoolife.com

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Special Thanks
Euroservice Traductions (Mi)

Colour reproduction
Esseci (MI)

Printing
Tiber S.p.A.
Via Della Volta, 179
Brescia, Italy
tel. +39 030 3543439

Distribution:
UK
Comag
West Drayton, Middlesex

Australia
Network Services
66-68 Goulburn Street, Sydney

Canada
Disticor Magazine Distribution Services
Ajax, Ontario, Canada

France
MLP
55, Bd de la Noiree
38291 St. Quentin Fallavier, Cedex

Germany
DPV
Nordendstraße 2
D-64546 Mörfelden-Walldorf

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Cinisello Balsamo (MI)

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Avenida Valdelaparra, 29
28108 Alcobendas (Madrid)

South America
Hispanedia
Barcelona, Spain

USA
Edition published by Five Star Media Inc.
PO BOX 1071, Pacifica, CA 94044
USA distribution
CMG Circulation Services, Princeton, NJ

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A little bit of what you fancy!

The art of tattooing is so rich and complex and so connected to other disciplines that topics to be explored and incentives to do research are numerous and varied. This edition of Tattoo Energy is once again, further proof of this. We must confess that even for us, in the editorial department, there is always something to discover and discuss. As you browse through these pages you will become aware of this. We talk about tattoo artists – the great masters of their trade – but also history of art, cartoons, music and cinema and there is always an original study on the symbology of subjects and elements that orbit around our artistic globe. In short, it's

practically impossible to pick up and read a copy of Energy without coming across an interesting or fascinating article. We'll see together if this is true.

We start off by meeting the main protagonists of this edition, two fascinating and interesting characters yet complete opposites, **Guil Zekri** and **Tony Ciavarro**. The first has an incredible story to tell; the path of his life, which has slowly but relentlessly led him towards tattooing, has not been a straight one. Born in Israel, with a degree in Visual Arts in Paris yet first and foremost a musician, Guil Zekri found fulfilment in Cologne where he opened his tattoo shop and specialised in his baroque-

EDITORIAL



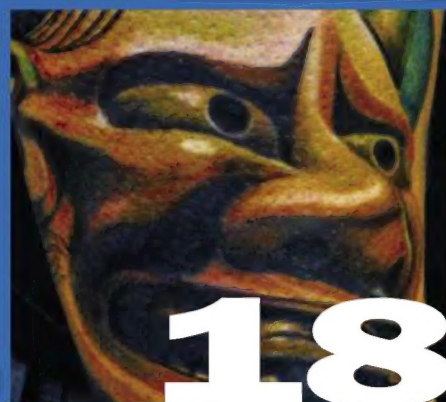
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inspired, 'sacred, dark' style. Tony Ciavarro, meanwhile, is considered one of the masters of new school, and in our interview you will see that he has an extraordinary sense of humour and loves making people laugh, even through his work.

Next we meet **Michael Franti**, a musician who needs no introduction, who explained to us how tattoos have more of a spiritual than physical significance for him. He also reveals details about his life and art.

Movie fans, however, must not miss the Portraits section which features the 90's cult movie: **Back to the Future**. We reveal what went on behind the scenes from its

inception to the soundtrack and the rise of its actors, the great Michael J. Fox and Christopher Lloyd.

The regular Symbology feature is dedicated to **light**, which has always been synonymous with life and divinity, but which has been the subject of a wide variety of interpretations throughout the centuries. Aristotle, Saint Augustine, Dante Alighieri, Einstein and even Buddha are all involved in bringing you a detailed analysis on the subject.

We close with our gallery: **demons, hearts, felines, birds** and lots of **Chicano**.

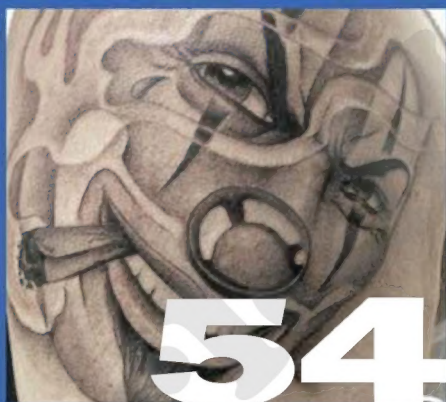
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MUSIC

Text by Simone Sacco



MICHAEL FRANTI EVERYONE DESERVES A GOOD TATTOO!

ANYONE WHO LABELS MICHAEL FRANTI AS JUST A POP MUSICIAN IS MAKING A MISTAKE. THIS 45-YEAR OLD CALIFORNIAN (WHO LOVES BALI) AND IS AN INNOVATOR OF HIP HOP (THE DISPOSABLE HEROES OF HIPHOPRISY PROJECT), A DEDICATED FILM-MAKER, YOGA TEACHER AND A CONFIRMED 'BARE FOOTER' (HE HASN'T WORN SHOES FOR MORE THAN TEN YEARS!). IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING HE IS A CONNOISSEUR OF MAORI TATTOOS, HIS FAVOURITES BEING KIRITUHI. LET'S GET TO KNOW HIM A LITTLE BETTER WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM THE POSITIVE WAVES COMING FROM HIS LATEST ALBUM 'THE SOUND OF SUNSHINE'...

Hi Michael! I'm going to start with the inevitable question regarding the inspiration for your Maori tattoos: where did this passion originate?

I started noticing tattoos when I was a teenager, I was attracted by their aura of 'criminality' and 'rebellion' – I'm talking about the end of the 70's -, but as I grew up I associated them more with a mystical power connected to our very existence and the cycle

of life... To learn more about this I went to Aotearoa (the Maori name for New Zealand, Ed.) where a great sculptor friend of mine, George Nuku, introduced me to the beauty and the wonders of this happy island. It had to be around 1992 and I got my first official tattoo in '94.

Since then you've been showing off some magnificent Kirituhi. The same goes for certain songs you created with Disposable

Heroes of Hipocrisy and later Spearhead...

I appreciate your comments, but I don't like the term 'showing off'. Most of the time I keep my tattoos hidden because in my case, they're not for aesthetic purposes but they represent my innate sense of spirituality... Of course, if I'm on the beach in Jamaica or if I'm playing a gig in tropical temperatures, then you're going to see them! (laughs, Ed.)

Do you have any favourites?

I'm most fond of the 'Wheke' (octopus in Maori language, Ed.) which are on my left shoulder and it's a daily reminder of my family ties with all those around me (wife, kids, parents, band etc.). It's a kind of Maori Yin and Yang on my back. I wanted to reflect both my masculine side and my feminine side, both of which live together inside of me.

Which tattoo artist (male or female) do you interact with the best?

His name is Inia Taylor; he's a really good moko-artist who works in Auckland in his studio, Moko Ink. (www.mokoink.com). Things are never hurried with him, like, I



www.michaelfranti.com
www.youtube.com/user/FrantiTV

LINE-UP

Michael Franti – vocals, guitar
Dave Shul – guitar
J Bowman – guitar
Carl Young – bass
Manas Itiene – drums
Raleigh J Neal, II – keyboards
Jolene Rust – vocals

ALBUM

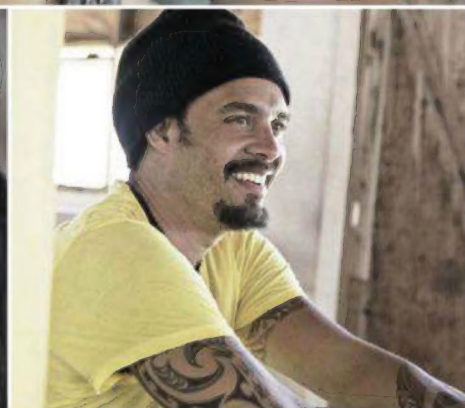
The Sound Of Sunshine

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Courtesy of EMI



don't ever go in, look at the walls and say 'Ok Inia, do the flash that's displayed up there!' Instead we sit down together and we discuss for hours what's going on in our lives. We philosophise and meditate for a long time. Then, out of the blue, we'll decide on the subject and that's when Inia gets to work. His task is to trace a kind of 'path' with his needle, which starts from where I am now and leads into the future...

I know that besides being resident in San Francisco you especially like Bali...

In California I have a social life where I hang out with the guys from Spearhead, whereas I go to Indonesia in search of beauty. I love spending the winter there and in Bali I have opened a kind of *buen retiro* for the body and mind, we practice yoga and teach our guests how to breathe correctly (www.soulshinebali.

com). The proceeds go towards supporting a clinic for natural childbirth in Ubud, in another part of the island.

Can I ask you a music question before you go?

Of course! We all deserve music in our lives! (Franti is quoting the title of his famous album, "Everyone Deserves Music", from 2003, Ed.).

In your latest work, "The Sound Of Sunshine", even the title has great reggae influence. I'd like to know about your relationship with the legendary Bob Marley given that more than 30 years have passed since he sadly passed away...

Marley is everything to me. In the past I was lucky to have the chance to work with two of the greats of reggae, Sly & Robbie (who in the seventies also worked with the

unforgettable Robert Nesta and his Wailers, Ed.) and I often cover his mega-hit 'Could You Be Loved' when I'm playing live. For many people music is all about Elvis Presley or the Beatles but I think Marley did much better. He created the importance of the 'message' that we can transmit through 'sound'.

The good "Tuff Gong", however, didn't have any tattoos and yet half the world is wearing his portraits or quotations on their skin: don't you find that amusing?

Well, we're talking about the 70's and tattoos weren't so popular in those days...I don't know whether religion or the Rastafarian philosophy were the reasons Marley didn't get tattoos, the main thing is that whenever I see his 'portrait' on someone's arm, well, I can't help but smile and it makes me happy...



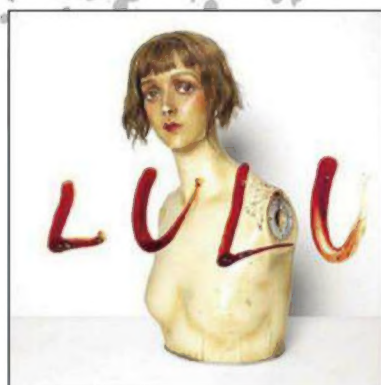
NEW SOUNDS

Text by Roy Micuzzi



LOU REED METALLICA LULU (Universal)

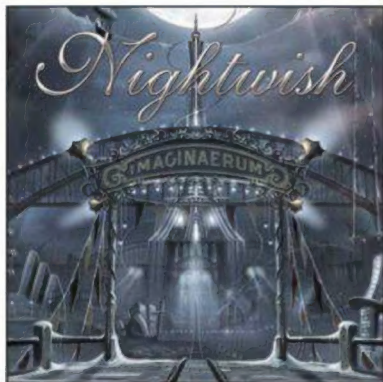
Here it is, the most contested and talked about hybrid of recent months. Lou Reed, toxic rock icon (Velvet Underground, 'Transformer', etc.) and intellect (remember 'Magic and Loss' or the masterpiece 'The Raven' inspired by Edgar Allan Poe?) has happily ganged up with Metallica, today's multi-millionaires and the ex-untouchables of thrash from the 80's. It could seem like a sick joke but 'Lulu' (despite



being a double album which features avant-garde together with chamber and ambient music...) just might be a huge success. It takes on a certain hypnotic and haunting appeal throughout its one and a half hours. There's no need to go into titles, and sometimes style is lacking (the single 'Iced Honey', too simplistic

and 'Load'-influenced). The 'Tallica often risk looking like a backing-group, Reed's lyricism calls all the shots, but these are just my empty words. The magic of 'Lulu' is in the musical story it tells. Listen and you'll discover...

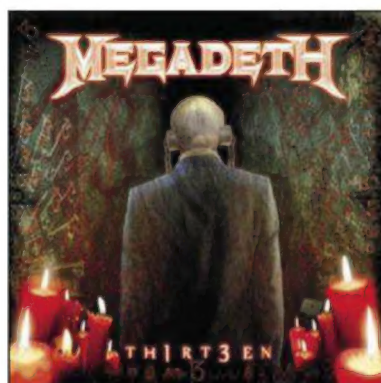
NIGHTWISH IMAGINAERUM (Nuclear Blast)



The fact that Dave Mustaine is a true artist and doesn't just 'work' with the seven notes is

clear from this album 'Th1rt3n', which, when you play around with the letters gives you the thirteenth album from the Californian band. I refer to him as an 'artist' in the sense that Dave loves playing with the music business. Business, alas, has only just realized how good Megadeth have been lately (the excellent songwriting in 'United Abominations' and the unbridled fury of 'Endgame'). Justifiably infuriated at such absurd indifference, Mega-Dave has shown us the 'mixed' side to his talent with a CD with the appeal of 'Countdown To Extinction' (more direct and conventional pieces) and includes a kick-ass song ('Sudden Death') like the good old days of 'Peace Sells'... The result? It's an offering for real fans which will give the picky fans something to talk about. And meanwhile, in his dark corner, Mr. Mustaine is laughing...

MEGADETH TH1RT3N (Roadrunner/ Warner)



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MACHINE HEAD UNTO THE LOCUST (Roadrunner/ Warner)



I don't know whether you've noticed, but it seems like Machine Head leave a gap of at least four years between each record. This can only mean two things: more attention is given to the arrangement (indeed 'Unto The Locust' is an exceptional piece of work) and they have enough time to take their new material on tour. Their previous, highly-praised album, 'The Blackening' displayed an unmatched violence that risked degenerating into a cacophony. Robb Flynn and company's seventh offering is nothing other than the 'structure' applied to the metal concept which takes no prisoners. Seven long and complex compositions, polyphonic experiments with singing and some wonderfully clear guitarwork. Pieces like these were put out in the 80's with the aim of making them pass the test of time. Exactly like 'Unto The Locust', which is really the 'Powerslave' of the gang from Oakland.

ent with a CD with the appeal of 'Countdown To Extinction' (more direct and conventional pieces) and includes a kick-ass song ('Sudden Death') like the good old days of 'Peace Sells'... The result? It's an offering for real fans which will give the picky fans something to talk about. And meanwhile, in his dark corner, Mr. Mustaine is laughing...

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BACK TO THE FUTURE PORTRAITS

Text by Simone Sacco

TOGETHER WITH INDIANA JONES AND RAMBO, BACK TO THE FUTURE WAS THE FILM TRILOGY THAT MARKED THE ECONOMIC BOOM AND GREAT SUCCESS OF THE EIGHTIES. WHILST WE'RE ON THE SUBJECT OF THE 80'S, UNLIKE THE EXPLORER PLAYED BY HARRISON FORD OR THE VIETNAM OUTCAST MADE FAMOUS BY SYLVESTER STALLONE (BOTH HAVE HAD THEIR UPS AND DOWNS AND ARE STILL MAKING FILMS TODAY...) THE AWARD-WINNING TIME-TRAVEL EXPLOITS FROM THE MICHAEL J. FOX/CHRISTOPHER LLOYD DUO DOMINATE THAT DECADE. LET'S SEE HOW IT ALL STARTED...

When they started planning a film in early 1984 that had as its main plot the theme of travelling in time (forwards, backwards between present and past...) many Hollywood producers pricked up their ears immediately. Ever since the days of H.G. Wells' *Time Machine* (1895) and up to Michael Crichton's recent *'Timeline'* (1999), the idea has always been an extremely fascinating and tempting one. Finally the rights to the screenplay, written by the new-comer Robert Zemeckis (who was later to receive an Oscar in 1994 for *'Forrest Gump'*) went to two big names in the industry; Bob Gale, the untouchable cartoon genius in America (much collaboration with Marvel and DC Comics) and a certain Steven Spielberg, who needs no further introduction. The director of *'Close Encounters of the Third Kind'* and *'E.T.'*, amongst other things, had the first winning idea for the project which was to discard the idea of using a refrigerator as a time-capsule ("We were concerned that kids, infatuated by the film, might decide to try this at home...and end up locking themselves inside!"). Instead he used a stylish DeLorean car which at 88 miles per hour can reach 1.21 gigawatts of power, a prerequisite for, dare we say it, "travel"...Another decisive hit was the choice of actor for the main part of the unfortunate student Marty McFly. Zemeckis intervened here with his usual inspiration; Eric Stoltz had been rejected (he did 6 weeks of filming and some takes of him shot from behind actually appear in the film...), so Robert went for the young and very talented Michael J. Fox, who was only 23 years old at the time with two films under his belt; *"Midnight Madness"* in 1980 and *"Class of 1984"* in 1982. The general public didn't know much about this actor

but it was the turning point for him. With a perfect script which combined 1980's stereotypes (the look, the skateboarding craze, the hair-metal cult etc.) time-travel paradoxes, Fifties nostalgia (blatant reference to another American blockbuster, George Lucas' *"American Graffiti"*) overwhelming sympathy (the misadventure where he came up against the 'bad' Biff Tannen played by an excellent Thomas F. Wilson) and a fairly conventional message (fate cannot play a part in our lives if we decide to fight against it...). *Back To The Future* became a box-office hit in no time, it won an Oscar in '86 and was the subject of two sequels (the even more hectic *'Back To The Future Part II'* released in 1989 and *Back To The Future Part III* in 1990). We're not going to go into details about the plot (given that you will already have seen it either at the cinema or in various other formats...), but these last few lines are dedicated to three other important names in the saga; the side-kick Christopher Lloyd who plays the part of "Doc" Emmett L. Brown (*"Great Scott!"*),

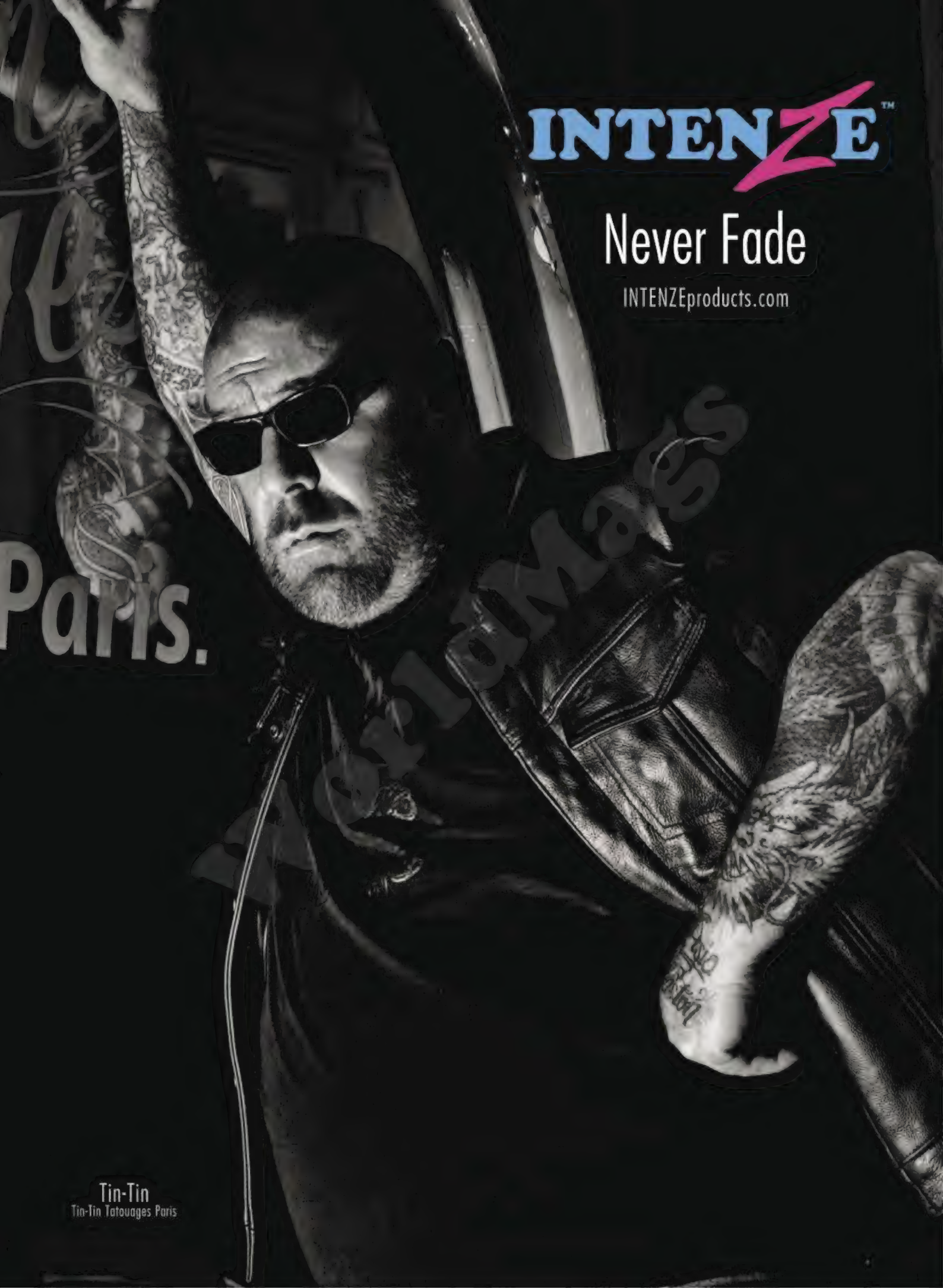


Bryan Childs, Spidermonkey Tattoos, Olympia, USA

the actress Claudia Wells (who played Jennifer, McFly's girlfriend, who retired soon after from the stage to spend time with her sick mother) and the musician Huey Lewis from the popular group Huey Lewis & The News. If *'Back to the Future'* was a film like no other, we owe this to *"The Power Of Love"* which features in the various opening sequences. It came first in the U.S. Billboard Hot 100 in 1985 and millions of copies were sold world-wide. Good times indeed. Almost worth taking the DeLorean parked out in the garage for a quick trip in time...



Cecil Porter, Under The Gun Tattoo, Los Angeles, USA



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LIGHT

by MAURIZIO DE PAOLA

MAN HAS ALWAYS IDENTIFIED LIGHT WITH LIFE AND A DIVINE PRESENCE, BUT OVER THE CENTURIES OTHER INTERPRETATIONS CONCERNING ITS NATURE AND WHAT IT REPRESENTS HAVE ACCUMULATED. LIGHT IS AN ELEMENT WHICH DEFIES DEFINITION, IT CANNOT BE LABELLED, IT PRESENTS MANY DIFFERENT FACES TO OBSERVERS WHO TRY TO DISCOVER MORE ABOUT IT.

Light is the element of creation in almost all religious traditions, it is the symbol of the divine presence, it communicates its holy will and is a metaphor for knowledge. It is a synonym of Good in contrast with obscurity and darkness; the lack of light being the symbol of Evil. Light, in contrast to matter, has always been considered a dynamic and intangible entity, forming a unique ensemble which **Albert Einstein** tried to explain by way of his famous equation $E = mc^2$ whereby E is energy, m is the mass of an object and c^2 is the square of the speed of light. Despite the fact that populations all around the world are in agreement as to its significance, there have been many different interpretations and theories raised as to the nature and formation of light. These questions have been a mystery even for modern science until a few decades ago, and to some extent they still are today. Light has, in fact, misled all who have tried to investigate it for centuries, be it waves or particles, a discrete or a continuous vibration. So many changing theories made it impossible for anyone to classify it with a single definition.



Sebastian Domaschke, Lowbrow Tattoo Parlour, Berlin, Germany

This conundrum is due to the fact that it behaves at times like an electromagnetic wave, and at other times like a beam of particles and this duality, according to the quantum theory, is even influenced by how it is observed, which would almost have us believe that this is a projection of our soul rather than an autonomous, physical body. Despite opposition from the 'classical' scientists (including Albert Einstein himself), many experiments have irrefutably demonstrated this affirmation. Light has a constant speed, regardless of its intensity and the type of energy that generates it. This constant – just under 300,000 km per second – is used as a physical and metaphysical limit of what does and does not exist, confirming the fact that nothing can exceed the speed of light without shattering the logic and understanding of the space-time plot (very recent experiments have proved that at least one type of neutrino exists; how it does, is a mystery).

Before the nineteenth century it was believed that light was the result of

mechanical interactions caused by the spread of an impalpable substance which permeated the whole universe, known as ether, and whose existence was not questioned for centuries. Evidence proving the existence of ether was never found and at the beginning of the twentieth century scientists demonstrated that in order to exist and conduct light at a constant speed, it would require impossible characteristics. The ether theory – often confused with light itself – dates back to the time of Aristotle, who named it the fifth element, composed of fine, fluid matter, which surrounds and



Sarah Schor, Kings Avenue, NYC, USA

encompasses the earth together with the other four original elements (water, air, earth, fire). In Platonic philosophy however, light is considered a divine being



Yang Zhuo, YZ Tattoo, Beijing, China

through which God communicates to the celestial powers and to the light-sensitive world. According to this view, light is the physical origin from which all beings take their form. This concept evolved during the medieval era and convinced people that light could generate beings, or that it was sufficient to illuminate or warm an inanimate object for a period of time before that object would be brought back to life. Christianity tries to explain light as God's way of transmitting ideal principles of knowledge (especially in Saint Augustine of Hippo's doctrine) and Dante Alighieri suggests that God himself is nothing other than an immense source of light. The concept of light and divinity, however, is ancient. It is traditionally likened to the spirit and divinity, it appears as a symbol of holiness, generosity and beauty and is regarded as an expression of wisdom and virtue. It is primarily associated with

the sun and its symbolism varies according to the era and geographical location. In ancient Persia it is the symbol of holy power. In the case of **Ahura Mazda**, which is **Helios** for the Greeks, the sun god is represented with a shining aureole. Of course, having emanated directly from the Sun, it is considered a symbol of supreme power and so the rulers' crowns were made with shining materials which emitted as much light as possible. The traditional Hindu Vedas, however, used the concept of light to represent the spirit; the human soul which they believed was made solely of light. In Buddhism, light is the symbol of Truth, and is the essence of all that is spiritual. This is reflected in the name of the founder of this religion, **Buddha**, which means 'Enlightened One'. Followers of Lamaism believed reason and light to be one and the same. The metaphor of light is one of the bases of



Nick Baxter, Nick Baxter Tattoo, Houston, USA



Vale Lovette, For Love Tattoo, Garbagnate, Italy



Samez, Cherry Tattoo, Monterotondo, Italy



Tutti Serra, *Self Sacrifice Tattoo*, London, UK



Matthew Ellis, *Seven Crowns Tattoo*, Toronto, Canada



Tim Victim, *Art Machine Productions*, Philadelphia, USA

mystical literature. It dates back to Neo-Platonism, the emanation of God into the world. In Manichaeism the divine soul is compared to light. Here, however, light is considered the gift of the 'good' divinity, the opposite of darkness and the 'wicked' divinity. This is a concept which has been taken to extremes by Manichaeism, a religious cult which was founded in Central Asia in the third century AD. It preaches that light is the ultimate object of its worship, light is within each and every one of us and is a part of the great universal soul which is constantly battling against darkness. We must also remember that since the sixth century B.C. schools of Hindu developed original theories and explanations as to the nature of light, they were even

very close to the scientific discoveries made in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and adopt concepts which are very similar to photons. According to Vaisheshika philosophy, light was the result of a collision and movement between two or more particles of primordial elements. However, at the same time the schools of Samkhya were affirming that light was a continuous flow of energy released when other elements converted energy. According to Rigveda all colours were composed of a combination of three primary colours and the concept of the light spectrum, whereby seven colours are visible according to the frequency of transmission from the Sun, is typically Hindu. Throughout the ages the nature of light has always been identified but never understood, it's as if it represented the reason for our very existence, impossible to comprehend unless you want to lose yourself in it and become a part of it. The best way to find light, is to create light.

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(Philosophical Research Society, 1976)

V.V.AA.
Dizionario Dei Simboli
(Piemme, 1993)

Stephen Hawking
The Nature Of Space And Time
(Princeton University, 1996)

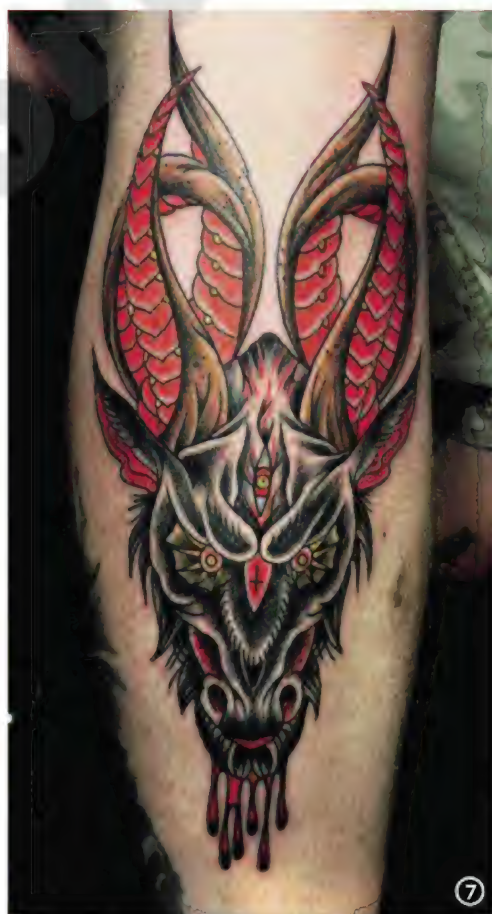
Aaron Della Vedova, Guru Tattoo, San Diego, USA







- ❶ Cory Norris
Classic Tattoo
Grass Valley, USA
- ❷ Andy Barret
Horseshoes & Hand
Grenades Tattoo
Chicopee, USA
- ❸ Dan Sinnes
At Woods Tattoo Crew
Luxembourg, Luxembourg

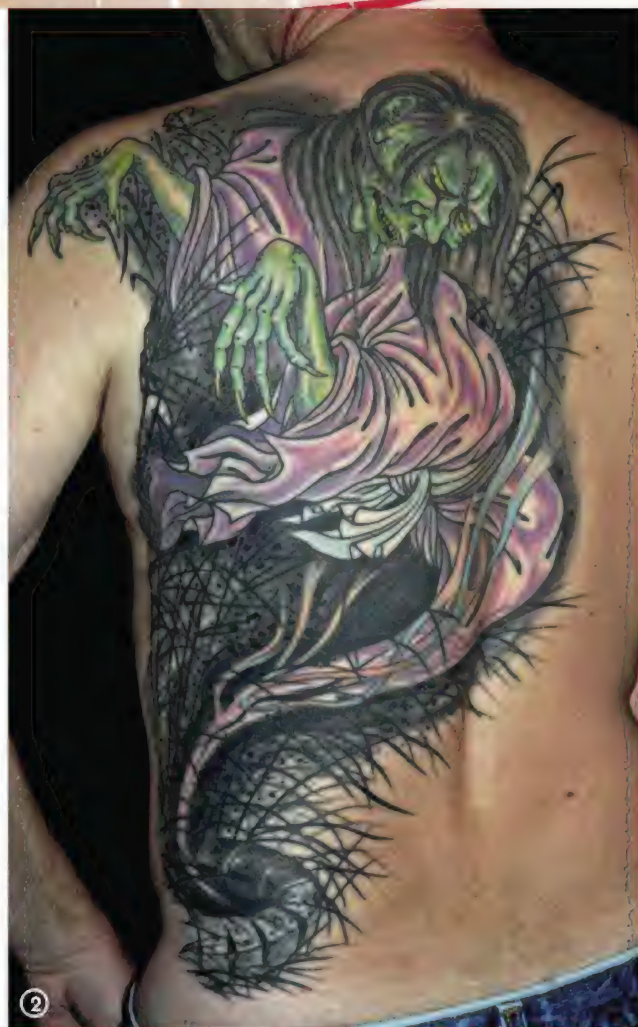


④ Adam Hathorn
Guru Tattoo
San Diego, USA

⑤ Boris
Boris Tattoo
Zalaegerszeg, Hungary

⑥ El Carlo
Aloha Tattoo
Barcelona, Spain

⑦ Gonzalo
Gonzalo Tattoo
On the road, Spain

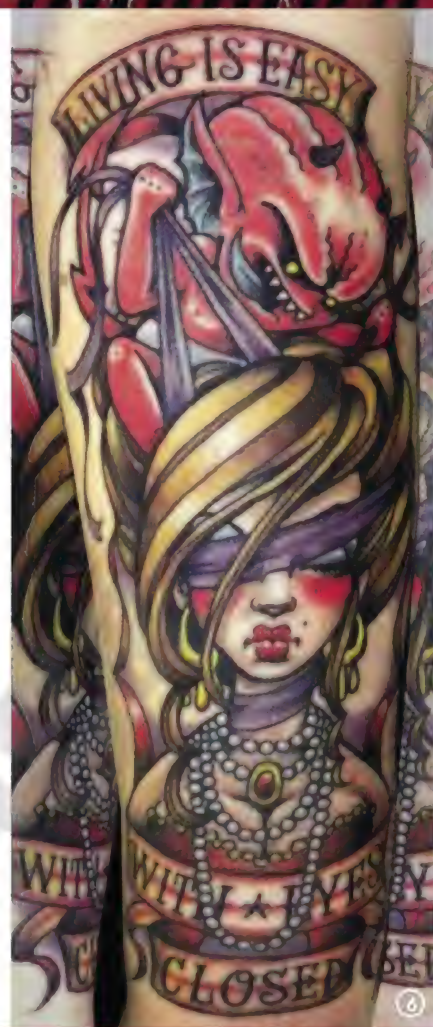


① Bernd
Tätowierstudio Hautnah
Landau, Germany

② Brad Fink
Iron Age
St. Louis, USA

③ Du Ze Wu
TianZunTang Tattoo
Shanghai, China

④ Diego Brandi
Subskin Tattoo
Rome, Italy



⑤ Chris O'Donnell
NY Adorned
New York, USA

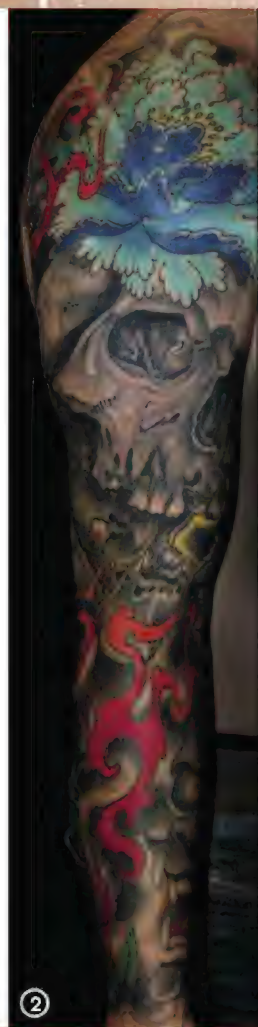
⑥ Erik Kuiken
Guru Tattoo
San Diego, USA

⑦ Carlos Rojas
Good Fellas Tattoo
Orange, USA

⑧ Christian Perez
Hope Gallery Tattoo
New Haven, USA



①



②



- ① Elisa
Elisa Tattoo
Scandiano, Italy
- ② Dalmiro Basaldella
Kingcarlos Tattoo
Stockholm, Sweden
- ③ Ching
East Tattoo
Taiwan, Taiwan
- ④ Cang Long
Cang Long Tattoo
Shanghai, China



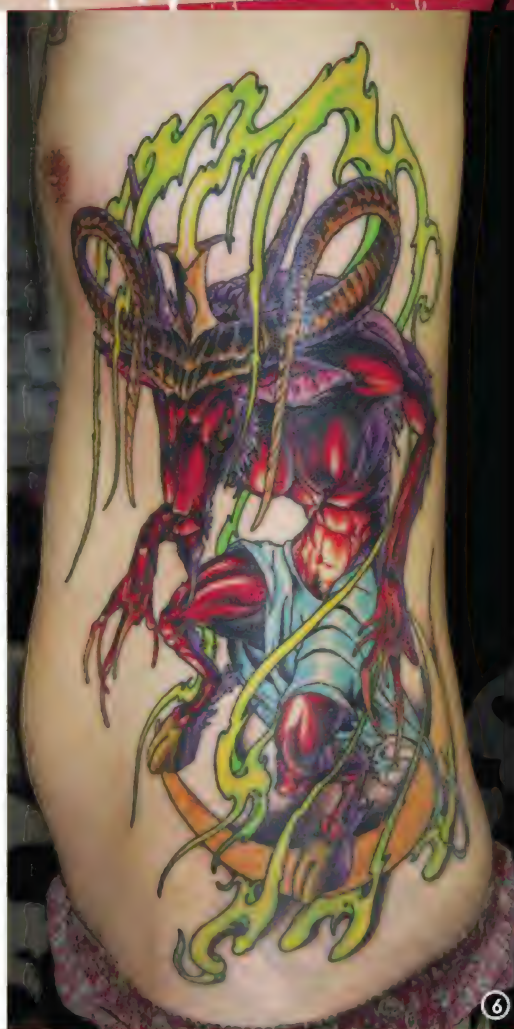
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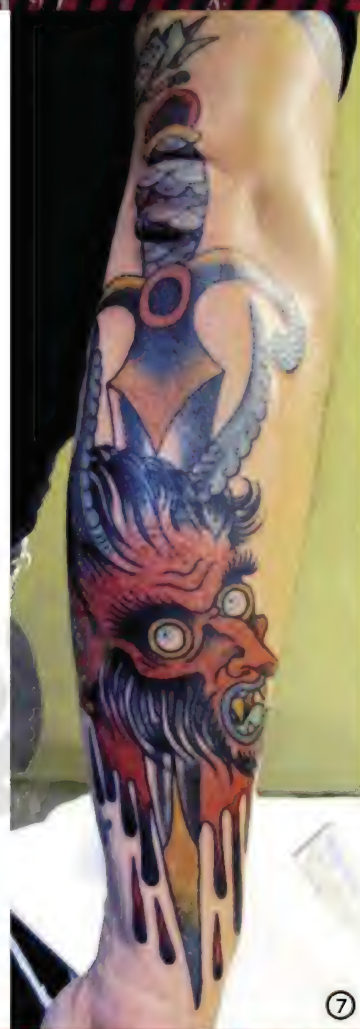
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5 Henrik
Henrik Tattoo
Toulouse, France

6 Edu Cerru
O'Reilly Tattoo
Santa Cruz, USA

7 El Monga
Aloha Tattoo
Barcelona, Spain

8 Chris Crooks
White Dragon Tattoo
Belfast, Ireland

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TONY CIAVARRO

The great self-made tattoo artist



Photo by Hugh Murph

STINKY MONKEY TATTOOS

02364 Kingston MA, USA

Phone : +1.781 585 93 93

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www.tonyciavarro.com

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TONY CIAVARRO IS ONE OF THE WORLD'S BEST TATTOO ARTISTS AS FAR AS THE «NEW SCHOOL» STYLE IS CONCERNED. HIS CARTOONS ARE AMUSING AND FULL OF LIFE. THIS GUY IS A REAL PERFECTIONIST AND SPARES NO ATTENTION TO DETAIL. ALWAYS WITH A NOTEPAD AT THE READY, HE SKETCHES

CONSTANTLY. HENCE THE TITLE OF HIS FIRST DVD, *SHUT UP AND DRAW!* I KNEW THAT OUR FIRST MEETING AT THE EVIAN TATTOO CONVENTION WOULD BE MORE THAN A BRIEF ENCOUNTER. TONY IS NOW A FRIEND AND HE OPENS UP TO TATTOO ENERGY WITH HIS USUAL LIGHT-HEARTED HUMOUR...

Text by David 'dats' Racana



HI TONY! CAN YOU TELL US WHY YOU DECIDED TO BECOME A TATTOO ARTIST?

I didn't have anything better to do. Just kidding... I have been drawing all my life. Tattooing gave me the chance to earn a living doing what I love. For me it's another way of expressing myself, just like painting and drawing, only I'm working on skin. Plus I have a lot of fun interacting with customers.

HOW DID YOU LEARN TATTOOING, AND WHO TAUGHT YOU?

I did an apprenticeship at a place called Green Man Studio in West Hartford, Connecticut. It was illegal to tattoo in Massachusetts where I was living at the time, so I had a four-hour roundtrip, driving to get to work every day. It was here that I got my first tattoo. I started my apprenticeship under an artist named Jon Elliott. A couple weeks after I started they hired Jerry Issel. Jerry has taught me most of what I know. He and I have worked together ever

since, it's been twelve years now. I've also picked up a ton of tricks watching tattooing at conventions and in tattoo shops that I've visited. Tattooing is a pretty tight-knit community and as long as you're not a cocky asshole, people will help you out with any questions you might have. The industry is really cool in that way. At conventions you can walk right up to the best tattoo artists in the world and talk to them.

DID YOU GO TO ART SCHOOL?

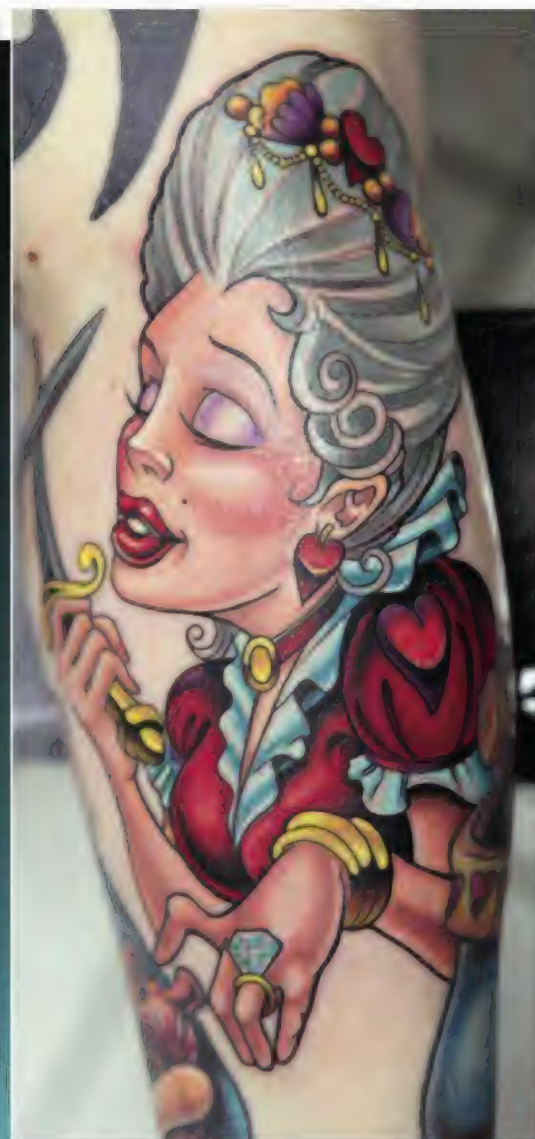
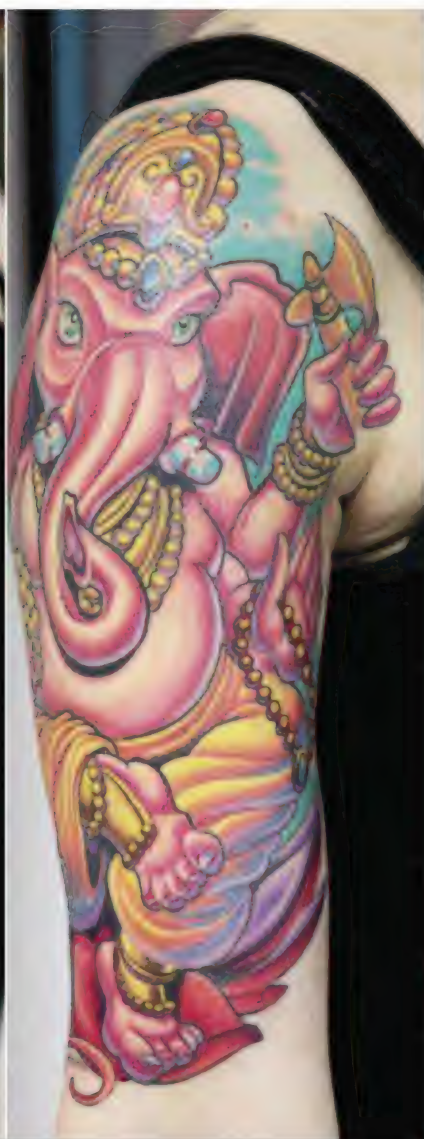
No, I'm self taught. I've taught myself everything I know. I believe it's all about practice. I draw all the time constantly trying to improve my skills. If you practice anything enough, eventually you get good at it. When I look back at the drawings I did when I first started out I get really embarrassed, but if I hadn't done them or kept on improving, I wouldn't be where I am today.

WHICH TATTOO ARTISTS HAVE INSPIRED YOU?

There are quite a few and the list keeps growing with amazing tattoo artists popping up all the time. When I first started the artists that inspired me were Frank Lee, Joe Capobianco, Eric Merrill, Jime Litwalk to name a few. Recently I find myself appreciating the technique of artists like Lars Uwe, Corey Kruger and Russ Abbott. Their work has inspired me to improve all levels of my work.

YOU TATTOO IN THE NEW SCHOOL STYLE, INSPIRED BY CARTOONS: IS THIS YOUR FAVOURITE STYLE, OR IS IT WHAT PEOPLE ASK YOU TO DO?

I've always enjoyed drawing in cartoon and new school style. I really like art that makes people smile. I'm lucky though, as I have fun creating any tattoo regardless of style. People ask me for some pretty oddball stuff and I love it. When someone asks me for a piece that is funny or weird, I take their idea and add a bit of my own sense of irony to it. Customers who ask for



this type of work are my favourites because they don't take life too seriously. They're just like me in that respect.

CAN YOU TELL US MORE ABOUT THE NAME OF YOUR TATTOO SHOP, "STINKY MONKEY": IS IT THAT YOU LOVE MONKEYS BUT YOU THINK THEY SMELL BAD? (LAUGHS)

I get asked this question all the time. It's the nickname I used to call my niece, Cassie, when she was really little. I used the name so often that when she started to talk it was one of her first words. I was thinking about names for my studio and I didn't want to call it something really serious because it wouldn't be me. My mother suggested Cassie's nickname, Stinky Monkey. I thought about it for a bit and it just seemed to work. I have to say it's been useful for letting people know we're not all big, scary, biker-types. It's less intimidating walking into a place called Stinky Monkey than walking into a place called Dragons Den.



GIVEN THE NAME OF THE SHOP, PEOPLE MIGHT THINK THAT YOU LOVE MONKEYS, BUT WE KNOW THAT'S NOT TRUE...

That's right; I don't like monkeys that much. I prefer miniature giraffes.

YOU'VE PUBLISHED A LOT OF SKETCHBOOKS ALL WITH REALLY FUNNY TITLES. IT'S A CHANGE FROM OTHER TATTOO ARTISTS WHO SEEM TO TAKE THEMSELVES SO SERIOUSLY!

I really don't take anything too seriously. I believe in what I do but not to the point where I feel I'm better than anyone else just because I can draw. I make fun of myself as much as I do other people. You have to be able to laugh at yourself. I always try to add strange pictures to my books so that I can make people smile at conventions. It's always fun to see some serious, tough guy come up to my stand, flip through my book, see the ridiculous picture on the back and crack a smile. I like people to loosen up with

my sense of humour; they soon realise I like to have a laugh.

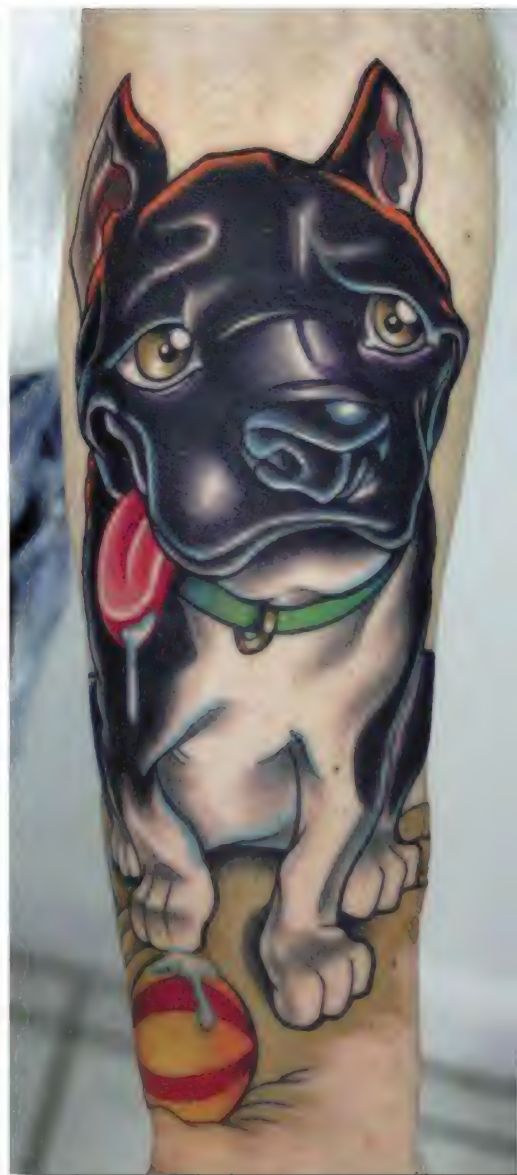
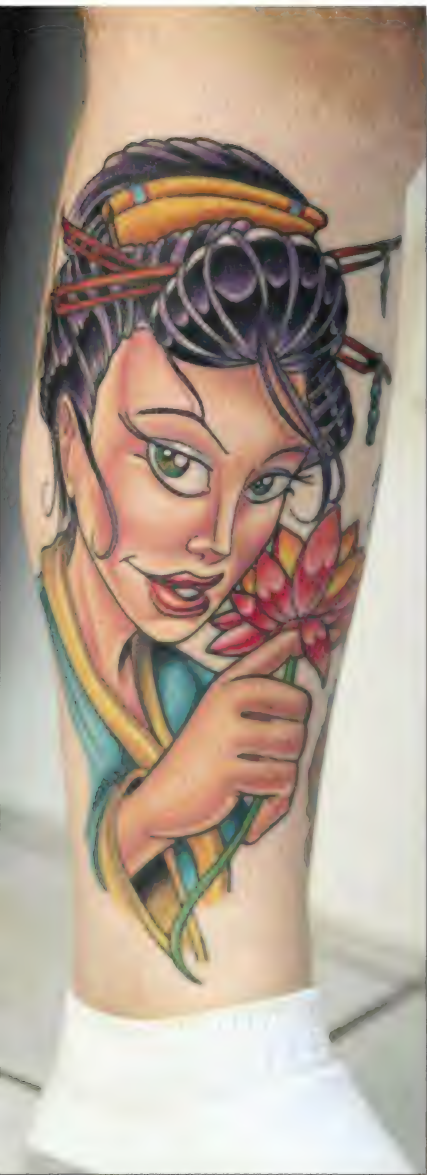
YOU'VE ALSO PUBLISHED A DVD: *SHUT UP AND DRAW...* IS THIS YOUR WAY OF IMPROVING YOURSELF: HARD WORK AND NON-STOP DRAWING?

Practice makes perfect. I'm far from perfect, but I'm getting there, just kidding... Like I said before, the more you do something the better and faster you'll get at it. I've been drawing for most of my life and if I'm no good at it by now then I'd better find something else to do, the clock is ticking. People were always asking me how I manage to draw so quickly. I figured I would put out a DVD to show people exactly how I draw. I'll be publishing more DVDs on Photoshop techniques and tattooing of course.

YOU'VE TAKEN PART IN LOTS OF CONVENTIONS, IN USA AND ALL AROUND THE WORLD: WHAT IS YOUR GOAL?

DO YOU LIKE MEETING NEW PEOPLE AND DISCOVERING NEW PLACES AND COUNTRIES?

Conventions are a great way to meet your fellow artists and you get to see them in action. It's also really nice to see how people react to your portfolio in person. Lots of my work is on Facebook and other sites nowadays and you never get the same feeling as when someone new looks at your portfolio and really likes it. I also feel it gives my art greater coverage. I try to keep my stuff reasonably priced so anyone can afford a piece of my art. Travelling is really cool too. I'm lucky, I have a great wife that I really like being around. Christine and I make a really good team at conventions. Whilst I'm tattooing she sees to people wanting to buy gadgets or needing information. I like sharing these experiences with her. Going round the world together is an easy way of going on holiday... At the end of the convention we





love to take a couple of days extra, just for us, to do touristy stuff.

TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR WIFE, CHRISTINE: SHE SEEMS TO BE A VERY IMPORTANT PART OF YOUR LIFE, AND YOUR TATTOO ART...

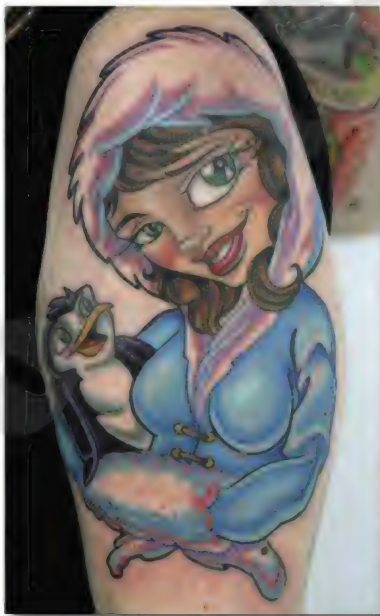
Let's see if I can answer this question without sounding too corny. I love my wife. Christine has been my biggest supporter since we met. She supports me in everything, regardless of whether I'm right or wrong. I told her when we met that my art is really important to me, and never to give me grief over the amount of time I spend doing it. Luckily for me she hasn't ever complained. I'm a workaholic and I'm constantly taking on new projects that stress me out, but Christine puts up with all of it. I couldn't ask for a better person to spend my life with. She will probably read this and realize she has me by the balls and become this crazy controlling bitch that forbids me from drawing and anything else I enjoy. Nah, I doubt it!

DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ELSE TO SAY TO THE READERS OF TATTOO LIFE?

I want to mention a new project that I've been working on for some time now; *Eternal Energy*. It's a new energy drink that features my art and graphics on most of the packaging. There are also a few other well-known artists working on the project. It's been a new and exciting experience, getting to design all of the packaging for a product that will hopefully go into large chain stores. You can see it at www.eternalenergyshot.com. A lot of tattoo artists will think I'm being a sell-out because of this. I'd just like repeat that it's all about getting my art out to as many people as possible. If no one sees your art, what's the point of creating it? Besides *Eternal Energy*, I have a ton of new stuff for 2011, a few new books, a new DVD, plus travelling to many conventions around the world. Well, to close I would just to thank everyone who has supported me in my career. As long as people like what I do, I'll keep on doing it. Thanks everyone.

TONY CIAVARRO





En, Genko Tattoo, Nagoya, Japan



Filip Leu, The Leu Family's Family Iron, Ste-croix, Switzerland





① George Bardadim
Bardadim Tattoo
Bonn, Germany

② Champion Grubbs
Guru Tattoo
San Diego, USA

③ Adrian Machete
Machete Ink
Berlin, Germany

④ Diego Brandi
Subskin Tattoo
Rome, Italy





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5 Jason Kunz
Triumph Tattoo
Burlington, USA

6 Holly Ellis
Idle Hand Tattoo
San Francisco, USA

7 Kaloian Smokov
Smokov Tattoo
Sofia, Bulgaria

8 Andrea Afferni
Andrea Afferni Tattoo
Novara, Italy

9 El Monga
Aloha Tattoo
Barcelona, Spain



① Adam Hathorn
Guru Tattoo
San Diego, USA

② Jess Yen
My Tattoo
Alhambra, USA

③ Heinz
Psycho Tattoo
Rome, Italy

④ Geza Ottlec
Immortal Ink
Chelmsford, UK





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- 5 Adam Hays
Red Rocket Tattoo
New York, USA
- 6 Cecil Porter
Under The Gun Tattoo
Los Angeles, USA
- 7 Ian Carter
Forever Tattoo
Sacramento, USA
- 8 Manekistefy
Adrenalink Tattoo
Marghera, Italy

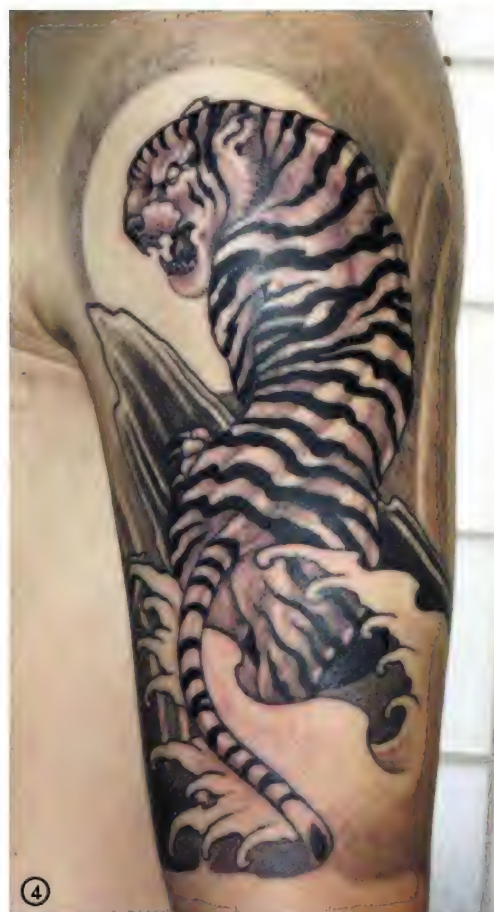


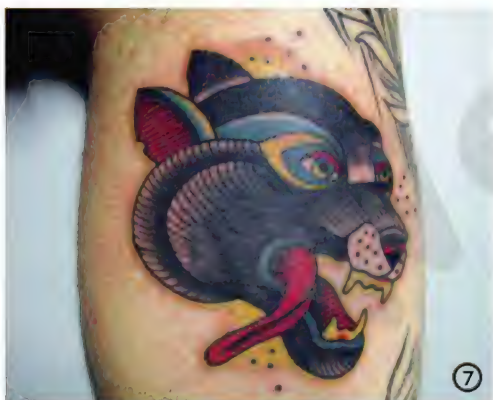
❶ Crispy Lennox
Evil from the Needle
London, UK

❷ Henning Jorgensen
Royal Tattoo
Helsingor, Denmark

❸ Cory Norris
Classic Tattoo
Grass Valley, USA

❹ Adriano Dall'Alpi
The Finest Tattoo
Querce, Italy





⑤ Bryan Childs
Spidermonkey Tattoos
Olympia, USA

⑥ Carlos Rojas
Good Fellas Tattoo
Orange, USA

⑦ Harry Morgan
166 Tattoo
Richmond, Australia

⑧ Dan Sinnes
At Woods Tattoo Crew
Luxembourg, Luxembourg

⑨ Javi Castano
LTW Tattoo
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GUIL ZEKRI

THE DARK SOUL OF AN ARTIST

GUIL ZEKRI WAS BORN IN ISRAEL IN 1974, HE STUDIED IN PARIS BUT LIVES AND WORKS IN COLOGNE, GERMANY. A PAINTER AND MUSICIAN BEFORE BECOMING A TATTOO ARTIST, HE STARTED OUT WITH TRIBAL AND ALTHOUGH HE LIKES ALL STYLES, NOWADAYS HE PREFERS DARK SUBJECTS, BAROQUE ART BEING HIS SOURCE OF INSPIRATION. HE'S AN ECLECTIC AND INTERESTING PERSONALITY, WITHOUT DOUBT SOMEONE TO WATCH OUT FOR.

Text by Stefania Perosin

REINKARNATION
TATTOO & PIERCING
Brüsseler Str. 75
50672 Köln
Germany
www.reinkarnationtattoos.com
facebook.com/guilzekri





HI GUIL, WE'RE PROUD TO INTRODUCE YOU TO THE READERS OF TATTOO ENERGY. WOULD YOU LIKE TO TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR HISTORY?

I was born in Israel in 1974 to a big family. After my military service I moved to Paris to study. I have painted and played music all my life. I thought, in fact, that this would be my future. Well, how I started out is a strange story. In Paris I was something called an "apprentice" in a studio. I learned more about cleaning floors than tattooing. So I left after 10 months and forgot about tattooing for like 5 years. Then I got another offer from Germany so I decided to give it a second chance... the music was not working. I was 29 years old and I've been tattooing for more than 8 years now.

DO YOU REMEMBER THE FIRST SUBJECT YOU TATTOOED?

I don't remember the subject because I can't read Chinese. It was a lot of Chinese letters and tribal. That was almost all my first 3 years, with some cool exceptions...



WHAT ABOUT YOUR MASTER'S DEGREE IN SCULPTURE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PARIS? HOW DID IT INFLUENCE YOUR WAY OF TATTOOING?

Well, I studied philosophy and aesthetic art. I never learned to draw or paint but I've learned about aesthetics, the words kitsch and ugly and the question "what is art", a lot of words to say that you can appreciate different forms of art even if you don't like them. It definitely influenced the way I tattoo and also my life, it just opened up different points of view. And

of course Paris, the city of lights; pure inspiration.

HOW MANY YEARS DID YOU SPEND IN PARIS AND WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO GO TO GERMANY? SPEAKING ABOUT THE TATTOO SCENE, WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THESE TWO COUNTRIES?

I spent almost 6 years in Paris, I love the city, lots and lots of information. I went to Germany to tattoo and I stayed. I think I stayed in Germany because of the variation in the different types of tattoos.





The French are more into Japanese and lettering, lots of oriental. The Germans are much more influenced by the rock scene, lots of metal rock and gothic. And I think that fits my style. I think that if I'd stayed in Paris I would not have made such fast progress, so thank you Germany!

DO YOU PREFER PAINTING OR TATTOOING? WHICH ONE CAME FIRST?

I was first a painter. I don't remember myself differently. I've always painted. I got lots of tattoos done before I started tattooing so I think the two things were connected in my brain. It just took me a long time to find the connection.

DOES ART INFLUENCE YOUR TATTOOS?

I love doing both. When I paint I'm only in a monologue with myself, that's good for the soul. When I'm tattooing I'm in a dialogue with my medium and that's fun. The two forms of art complement themselves well. All art influences my work; cinema, fine art, music, every form.

YOU ARE SPECIALISED IN DIFFERENT STYLES: ORIENTAL, REALISTIC, COLOUR AND BLACK AND GREY. WHICH ONE DO YOU PREFER? HOW DID YOU LEARN TO DEVELOP ALL OF THOSE DIFFERENT STYLES?

Well I don't really specialise in anything,

I just try to make a good tattoo. If I can imagine it, I can tattoo it. I like the oriental style because I travel a lot to Asia and India but I think I feel more comfortable in the mysterious dark art. Maybe it's because of the music I listen to.

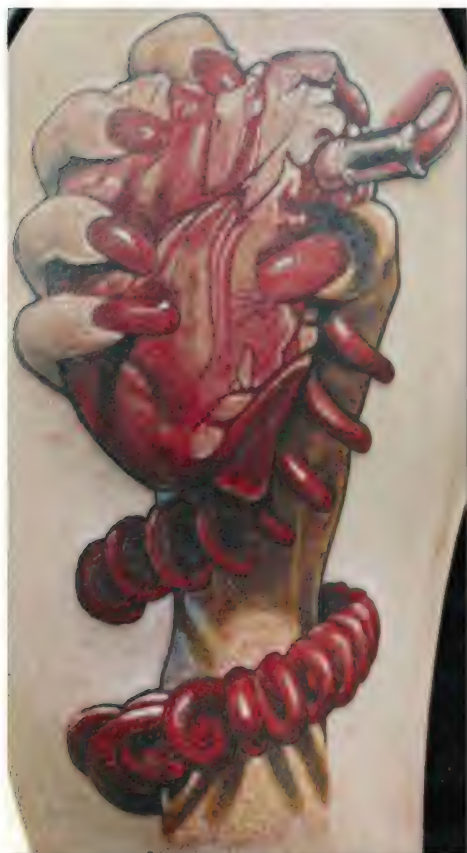
WHAT ABOUT THE STYLE YOU MENTIONED AS DARK AND SACRED? DOES THE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE - I'M THINKING ABOUT GREAT MASTERS SUCH AS TIZIANO, MICHELANGELO AND RAFFAELLO, JUST TO MENTION THE MOST FAMOUS - INFLUENCE YOUR STYLE? DO YOU GET INSPIRATION FROM THIS WORLD?

Renaissance...oh yes! I studied it for 5 years and I love it. But I prefer the

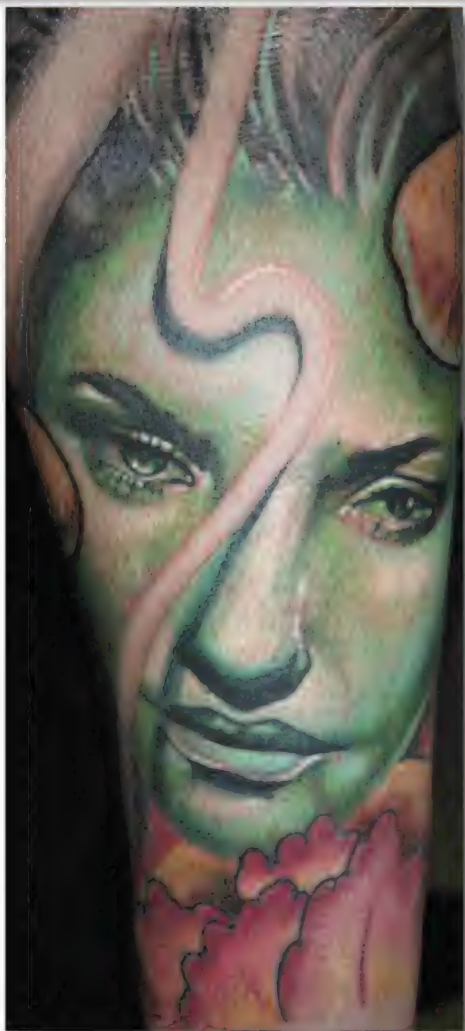
baroque period, a very important period in art, the real beginning of surrealism and artists' independence. Unfortunately it's not so appreciated. I do find a lot of influences in this period and I love the Italian artists, the compositions are amazing and so is the vision. I do like this feeling of floating in space, it's unbelievable.

I AM FASCINATED BY THE WAY YOU USE COLOUR IN YOUR REALISTIC PORTRAITS, BECAUSE THERE IS SOMETHING SURREALISTIC IN IT. IS THE SURREALISM AN INSPIRATION TOO?

Oh yes, I love surrealism, I think it's a very important artistic movement, total freedom and I'm very influenced by surrealism.







**WHO ARE YOUR FAVOURITE ARTISTS?
AND YOUR FAVOURITE TATTOOISTS?**

My favourite artist is a very difficult question. Ingres, Caravaggio, Pontormo, Dali, Gerhard Richter, Matthew Barney and a lot more. As for tattoo artists there's also a lot and for different reasons, Robert Hernandez, Guy Atchinson, Filip Leu, Bernie Luther, Paul Booth and lots more.

TELL ME SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR SHOP REINKARNATION TATTOO & PIERCING? WHEN DID YOU OPEN IT AND HOW DID YOU DEFINE THE ATMOSPHERE IN THERE? WHAT'S IT LIKE WORKING WITH THREE OTHER PEOPLE?

The studio Reinkarnation was opened in June 2007 and I never really planned it. It just happened and the atmosphere is definitely very chilled. It's a cool space, very relaxed (it goes crazy when the shuffle on the i-tunes goes crazy though... ha ha). I think the secret of working with 3 other artists is about being open enough to be influenced and to influence. You just respect each other's work what ever the style is.

HOW IS THE WORK ORGANISED? DOES EACH ONE OF YOU HAVE A SPECIFIC BRIEF?

I don't organise the work thank god, I have Maria. She is our shop manager and a very good one as well, but she's lucky because all the artists that work in Reinkarnation have different styles so it's pretty easy to decide which artist does what tattoo.

IS MUSIC IMPORTANT FOR YOU? DO YOU LIKE TO LISTEN TO ANY PARTICULAR KIND OF MUSIC WHILE YOU'RE WORKING? AND DO YOU FIND INSPIRATION IN IT?

Music is everything for me. It's very important for me and in fact I can't work without music or I get zero inspiration. I play bass and sitar; very different types of music. At the moment I'm working on a new music project. The studio album will be recorded in January and the band is called The Living Room. It's a two-man progressive atmospheric project. In the studio we have a lot of different stuff; my taste in music is very varied and varies between world music, metal, progressive, psychedelic and classic. And rock of course. A lot depends on the piece I'm working on. The best music for me at the moment is Porcupine Tree, Steven Wilson, Opeth, Puscifer, Massive Attack and the new Mastodon.



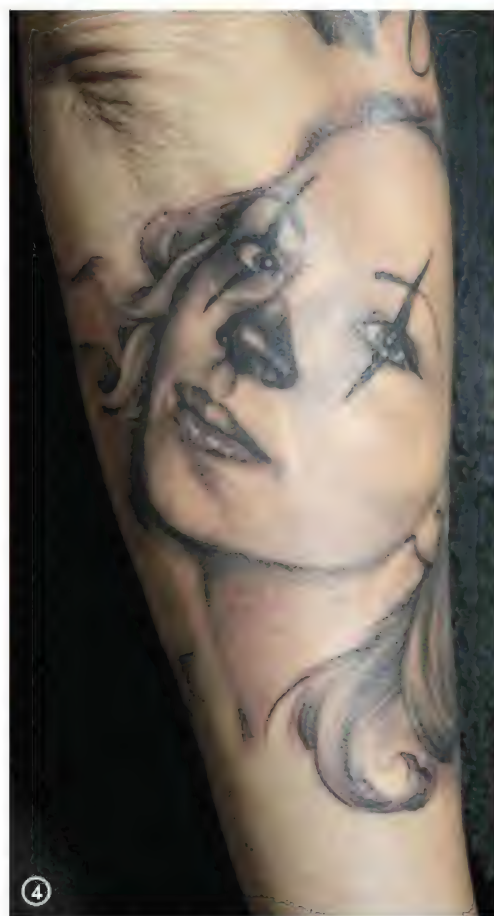
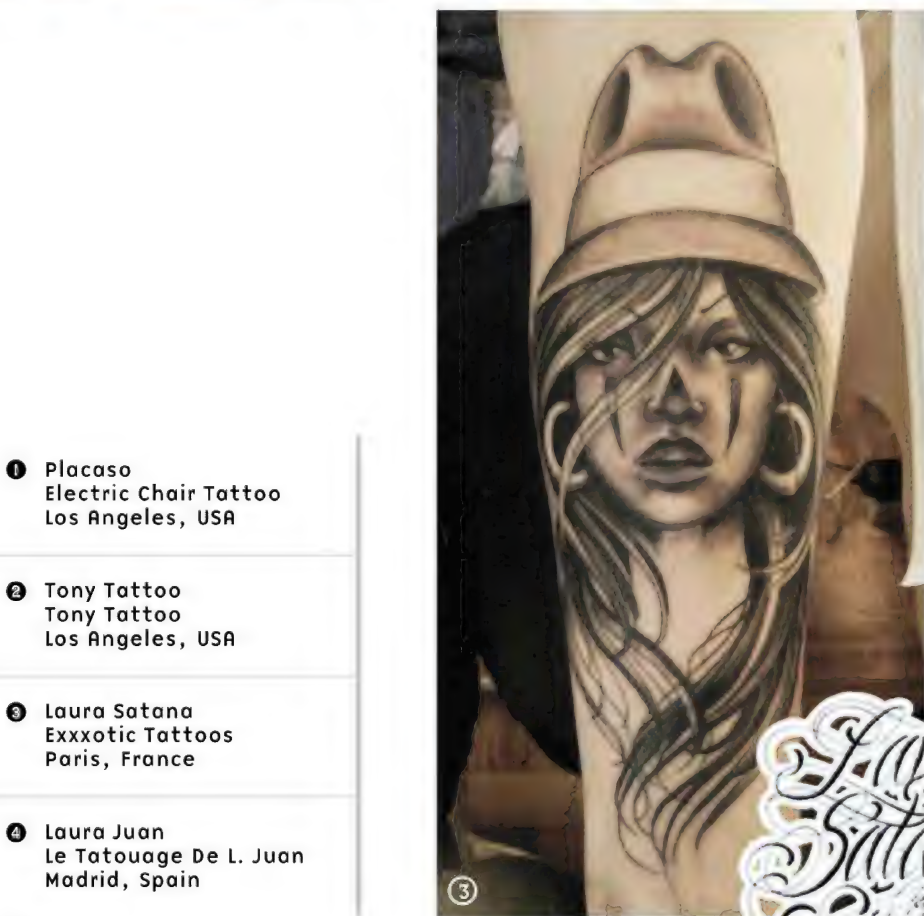






Maneko, Goodfellas Tattoo, Brasília, Brasil

Olá
Maneco

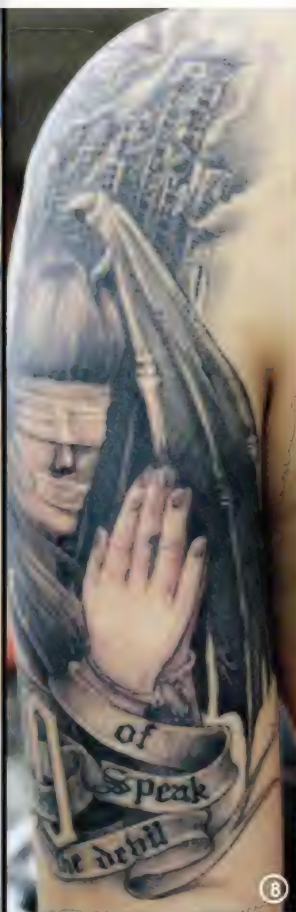


❶ Placaso
Electric Chair Tattoo
Los Angeles, USA

❷ Tony Tattoo
Tony Tattoo
Los Angeles, USA

❸ Laura Satana
Exxxotic Tattoos
Paris, France

❹ Laura Juan
Le Tatouage De L. Juan
Madrid, Spain



5 Antonio Todisco
Macko Tattoo
Monopoli, Italy

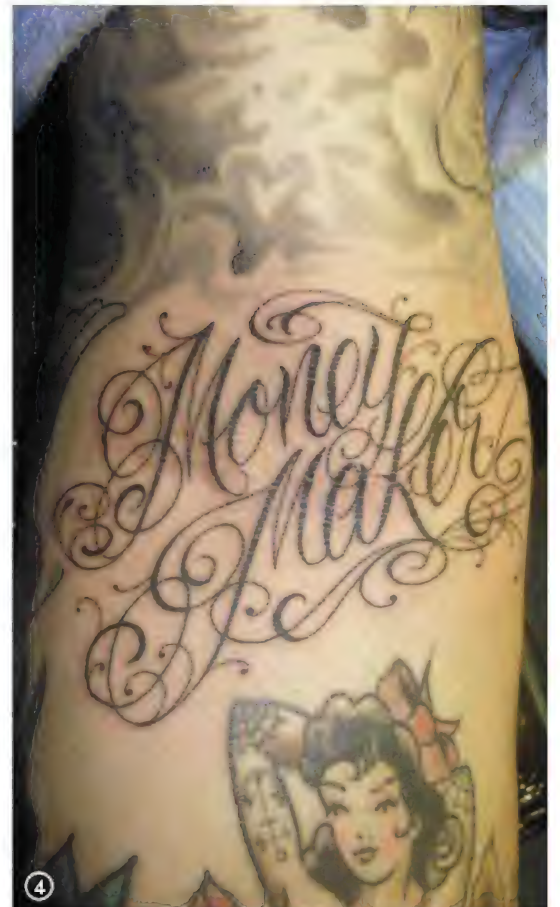
6 Miguel Angel Bohigues
V-Tattoo
Aldaya, Spain

7 Big Gus
Art Junkies Tattoo
Hesperia, USA

8 Chia
East Tattoo
Taiwan, Taiwan



- ❶ Tim Hendricks
Gold Rush Tattoo
Costa Mesa, Usa
- ❷ Krazy K
Krazy K Tattoo
Shizuoka City, Japan
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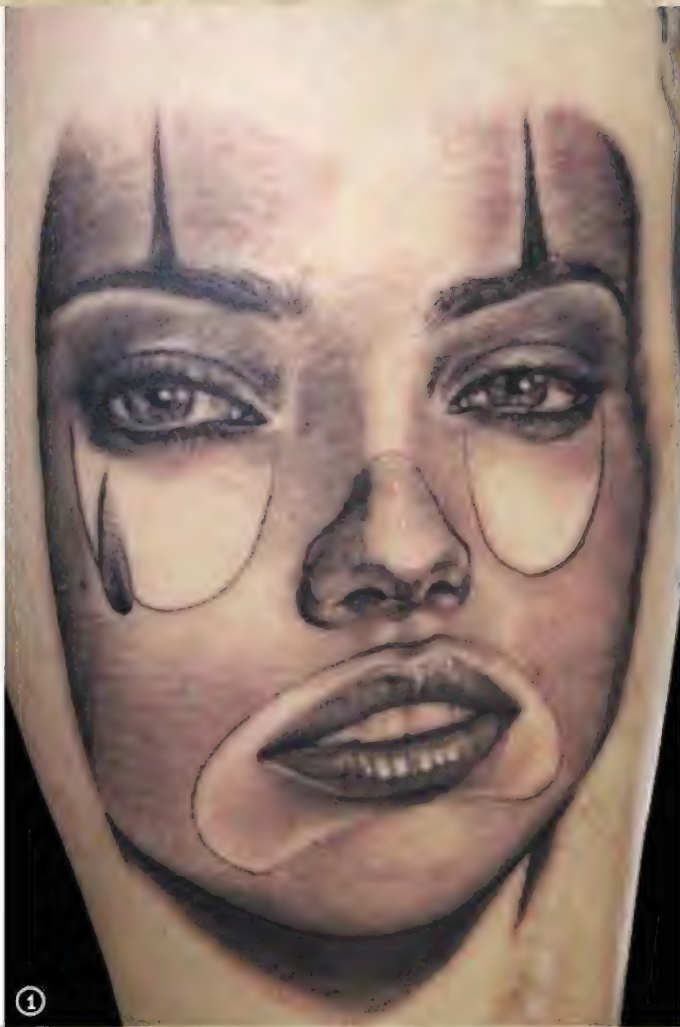


⑤ Laura Satana
Exxxotic Tattoos
Paris, France

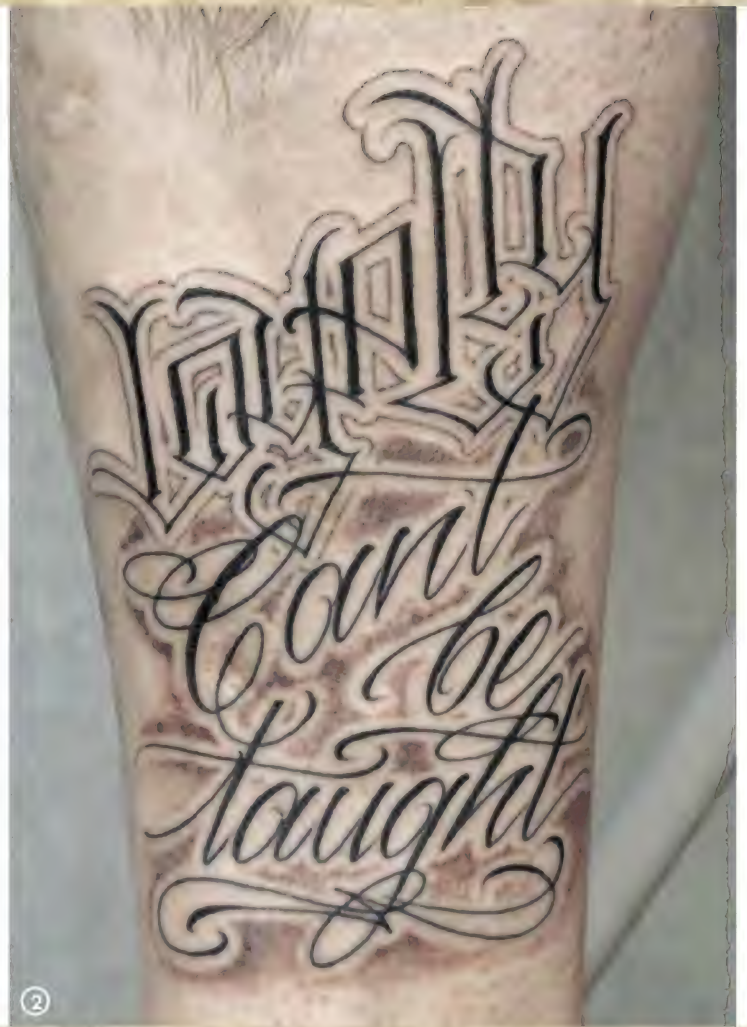
⑥ Posk
Buena Tinta Tattoo
Mostoles, Spain

⑦ Nick Rutherford
Third Eye Tattoo
Melbourne, Australia

⑧ Dan Sinnes
At Woods Tattoo Crew
Luxembourg, Luxembourg



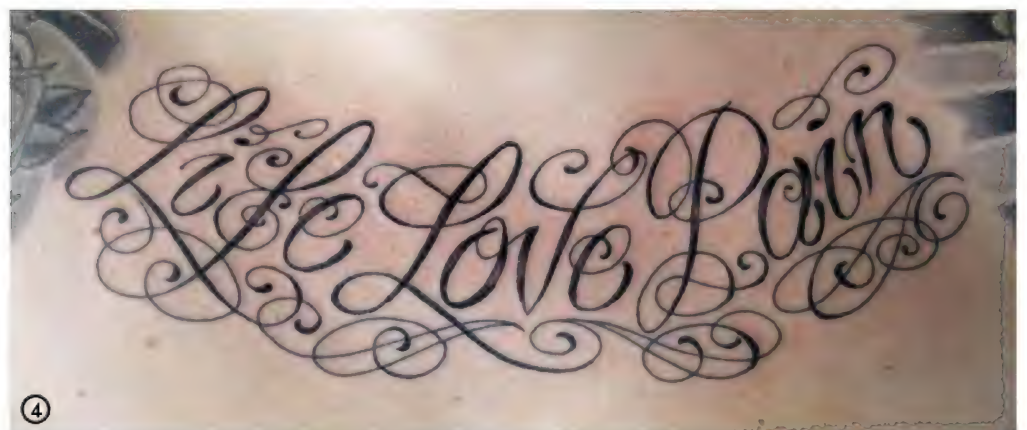
①



②



③



④

① Nina Grierson
Body Image Tattoo
Laverton, Australia

② Maneko
Goodfellas Tattoo
Brasilia, Brasil

③ Nick Caruso
Bound For Glory Tattoo
New York, USA

④ Nico
One Love Tattoo
Geneva, Switzerland

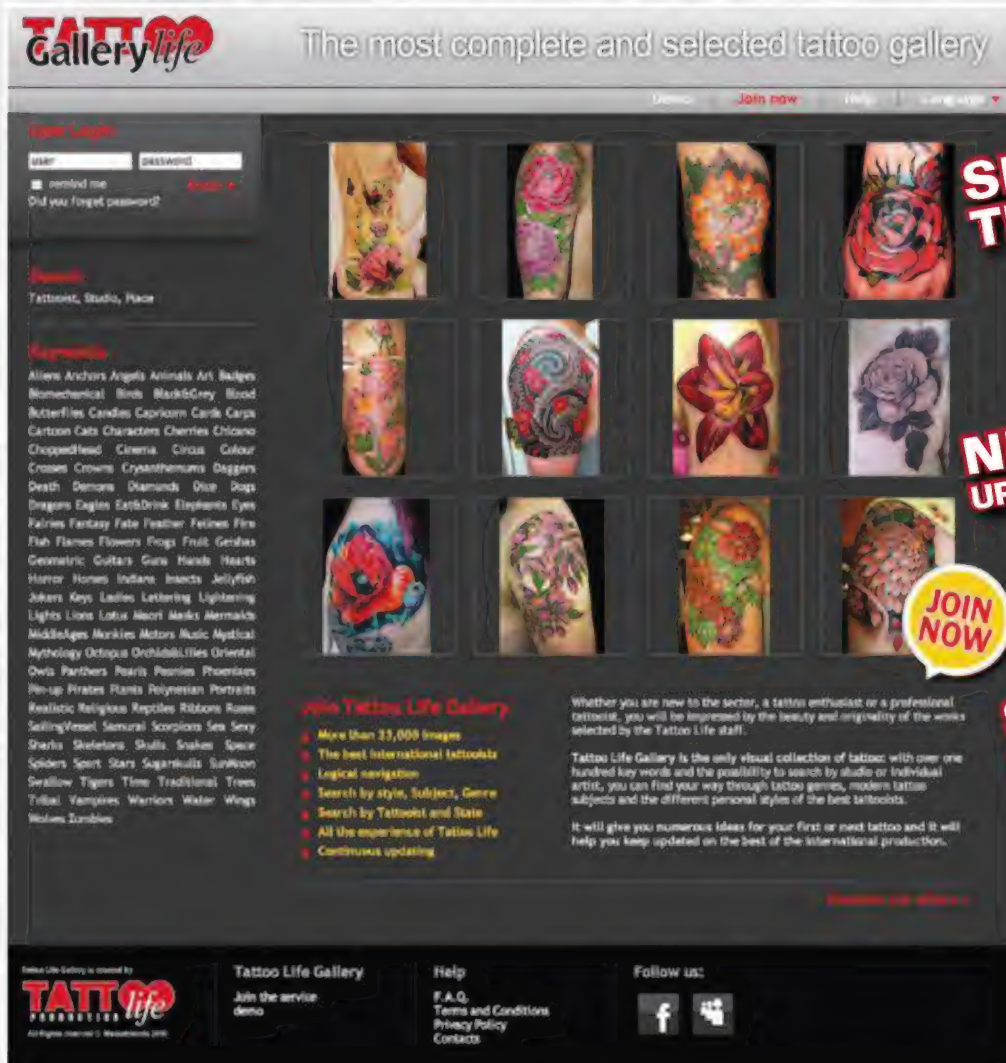


5 Placaso
Electric Chair Tattoo
Los Angeles, USA

6 Steve Soto
Good Fellas Tattoo
Orange, USA

7 Leigh Oldcorn
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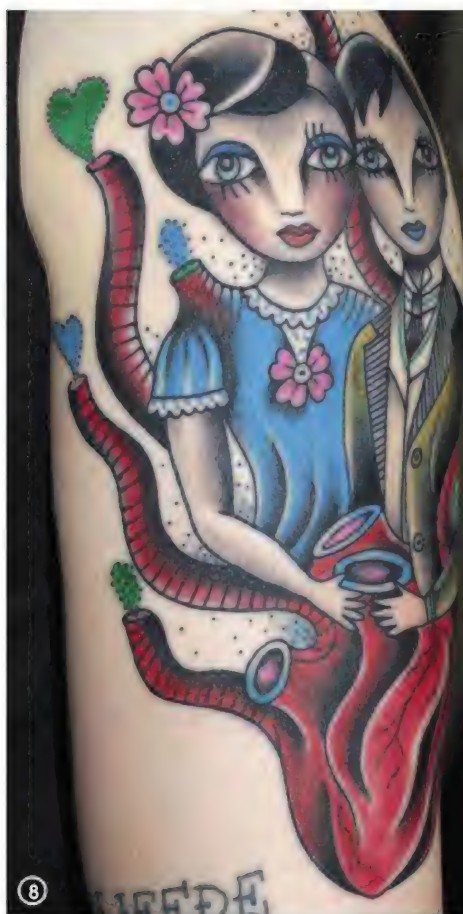
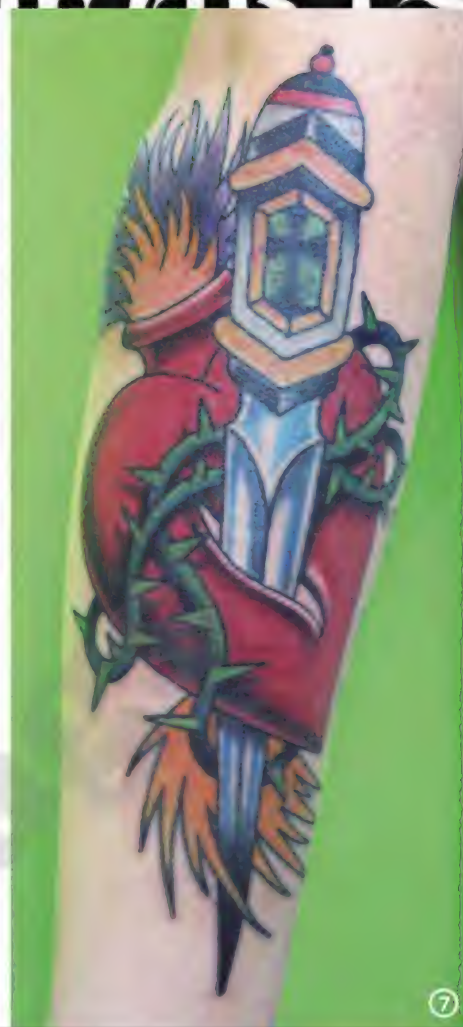
1 Juho
Otherside Tattoo
Lahti, Finland

2 Mason Williams
Mason Tattoo
Cincinnati, USA

3 Diego Brandi
Subskin Tattoo
Rome, Italy

4 Dane
Inkamatic
Trieste, Italy





5 Andy Engel
Andy's Tattoo
Kitzingen, Germany

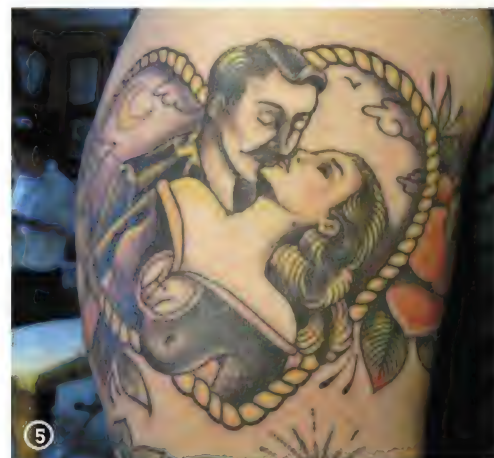
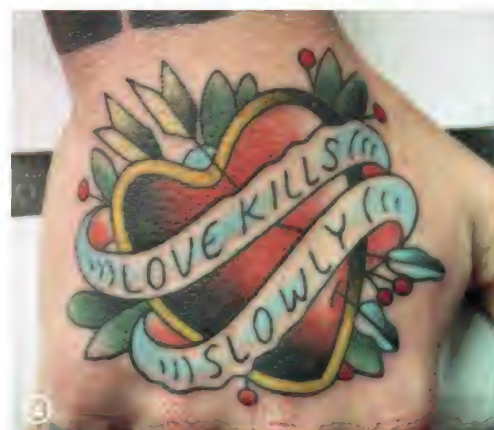
6 Eiland Hogan
Forever Tattoo
Sacramento, USA

7 Rudy Fritsch
Original Classic Tattoo
Trieste, Italy

8 Amanda Toy
Milano City Ink
Milan, Italy



- ❶ Damian Robertson
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Alberta, Canada
- ❷ Nick Caruso
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- ❸ Henry Rodriguez
Oddball Tattoo
Portland, USA
- ❹ Dan Smith
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6 Hexa
Precious Tattoo
Tampere, Finland

7 Darcy Nutt
Chalice Tattoo
Boise, USA

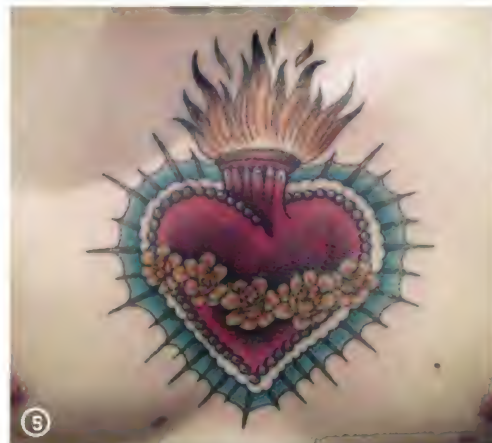
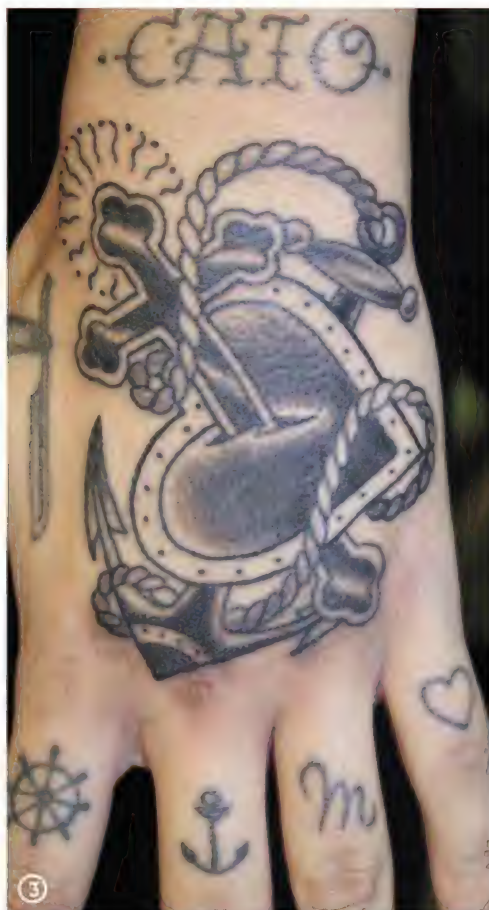
8 Charlie Foos
Read Street Tattoo
Baltimore, USA

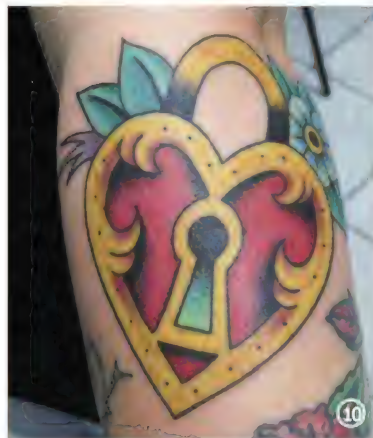
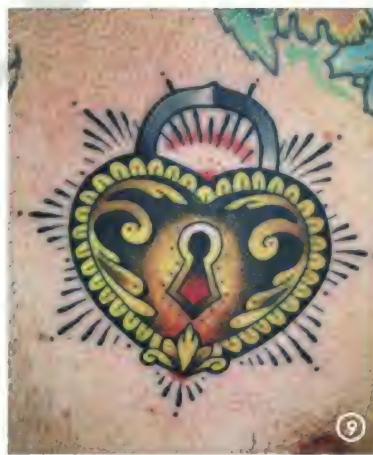
9 Fip Buchanan
Avalon Tattoo II
San Diego, USA

10 Gianluca Fusco
Deep Down Empire
Caserta, Italy



- ① Sean Herman
Royal Street Tattoo
Mobile, USA
- ② Arianna Settembrino
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- ③ Paolo Alfonsi
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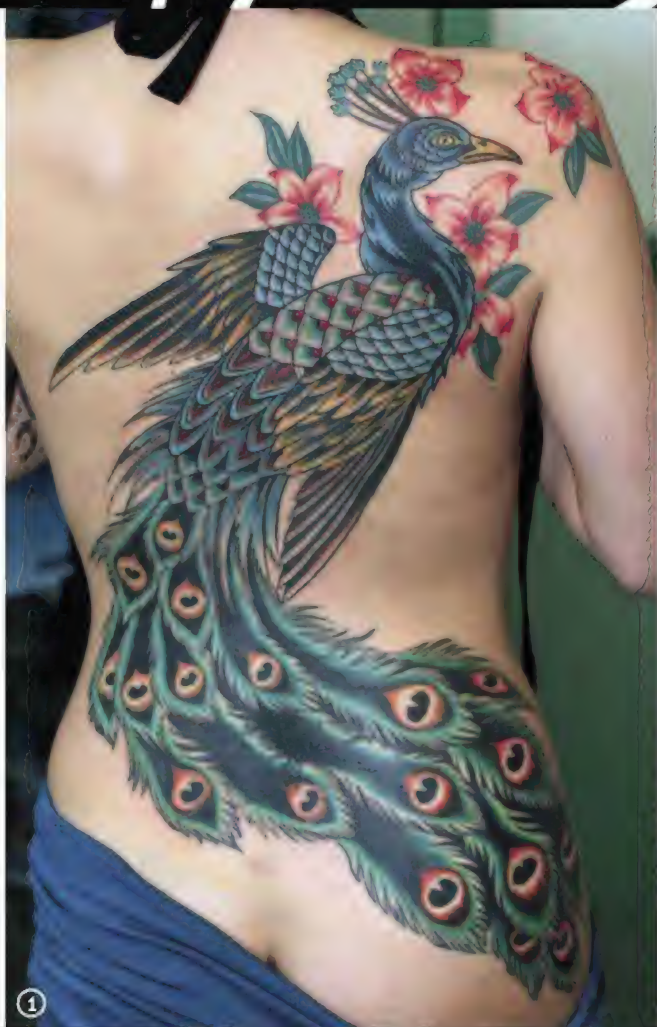
9 Giorgio Landi
Left Hand Tattoo
Acilia, Italy

10 Emiliano Liberatori
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Virginia Elwood, NY Adorned, NYC, USA

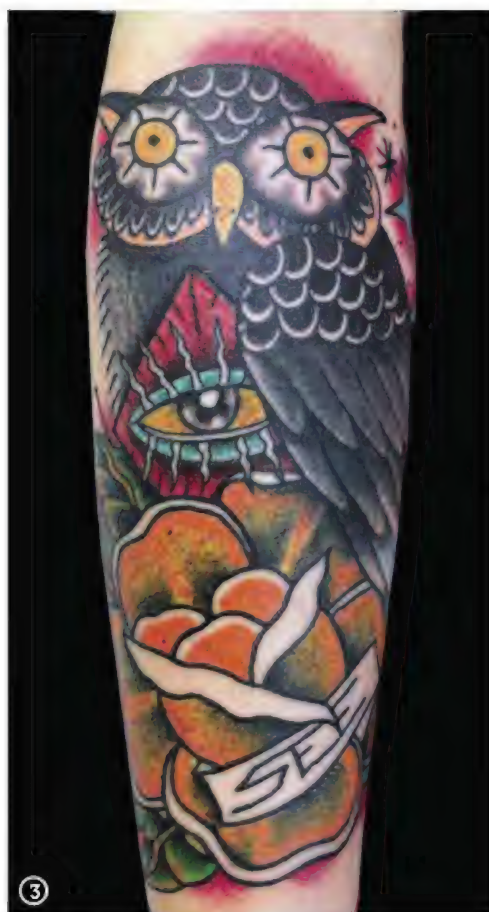


① Theo Mindell
Spider Murphy's Tattoo
San Rafael, USA

② Sandor Jordan
Akira Tattoo
Essen, Germany

③ Samez
Cherry Tattoo
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④ Pietro Sedda
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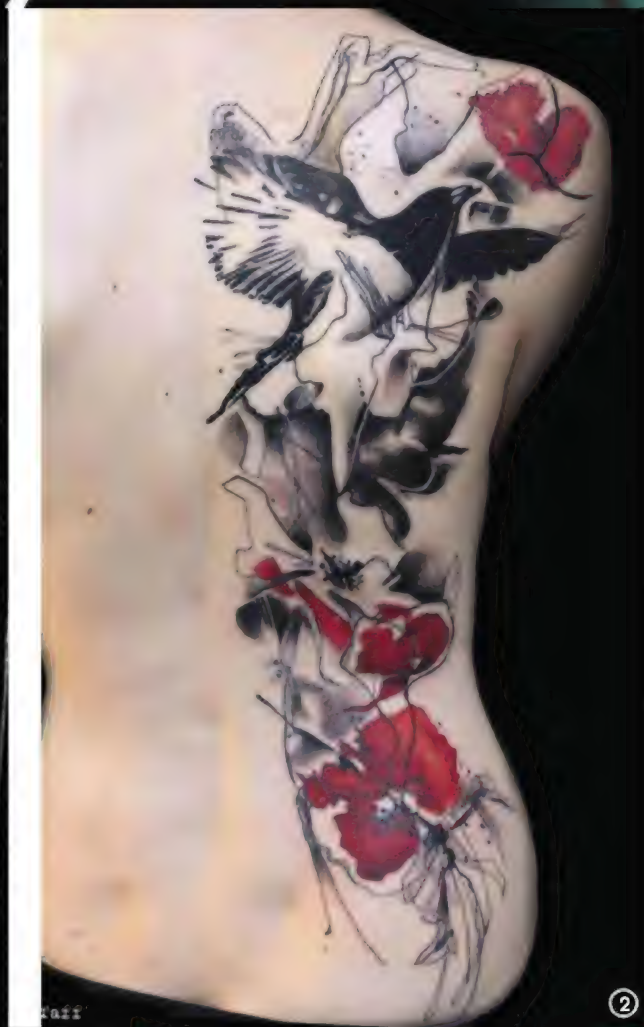


⑤ Matteo Pasqualin
Matteo's Tattoo
Porto Viro, Italy

⑥ Ricky
Ricky Tattoo
Monfalcone, Italy

⑦ Stizzo
Best of Times
Milan, Italy

⑧ Suzi Q
Holdfast Tattoo
Perth, Australia

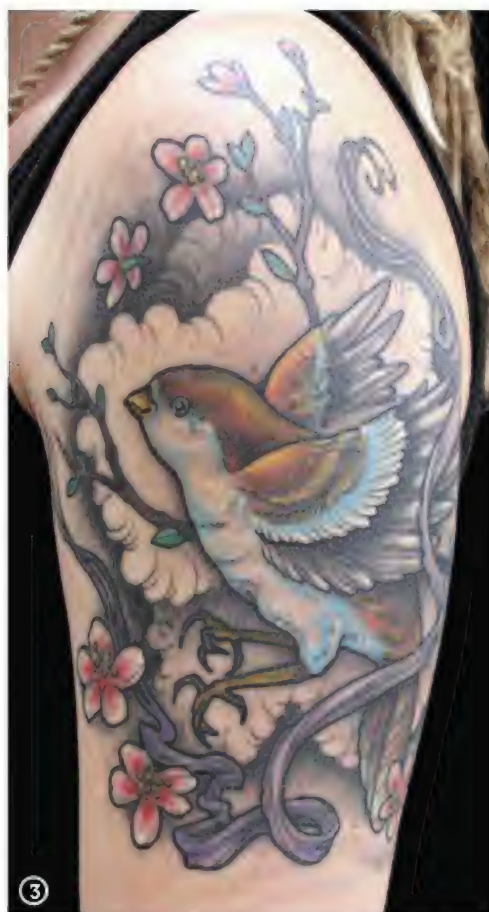


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Nina Tattoo Studio
Marino, Italy

2 Simone
Buena Vista Tattoo Club
Wurzburg, Germany

3 William Thidemann
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Denver, USA

4 Vince Villalvazo
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⑤ Mike Rubendall
Kings Avenue
Massapequa, USA

⑥ Terry Ribera
Avalon Tattoo II
San Diego, USA

⑦ Tutti Serra
Self Sacrifice Tattoo
London, UK



① Nick Chaboya
Seventh Son Tattoo
San Francisco, USA

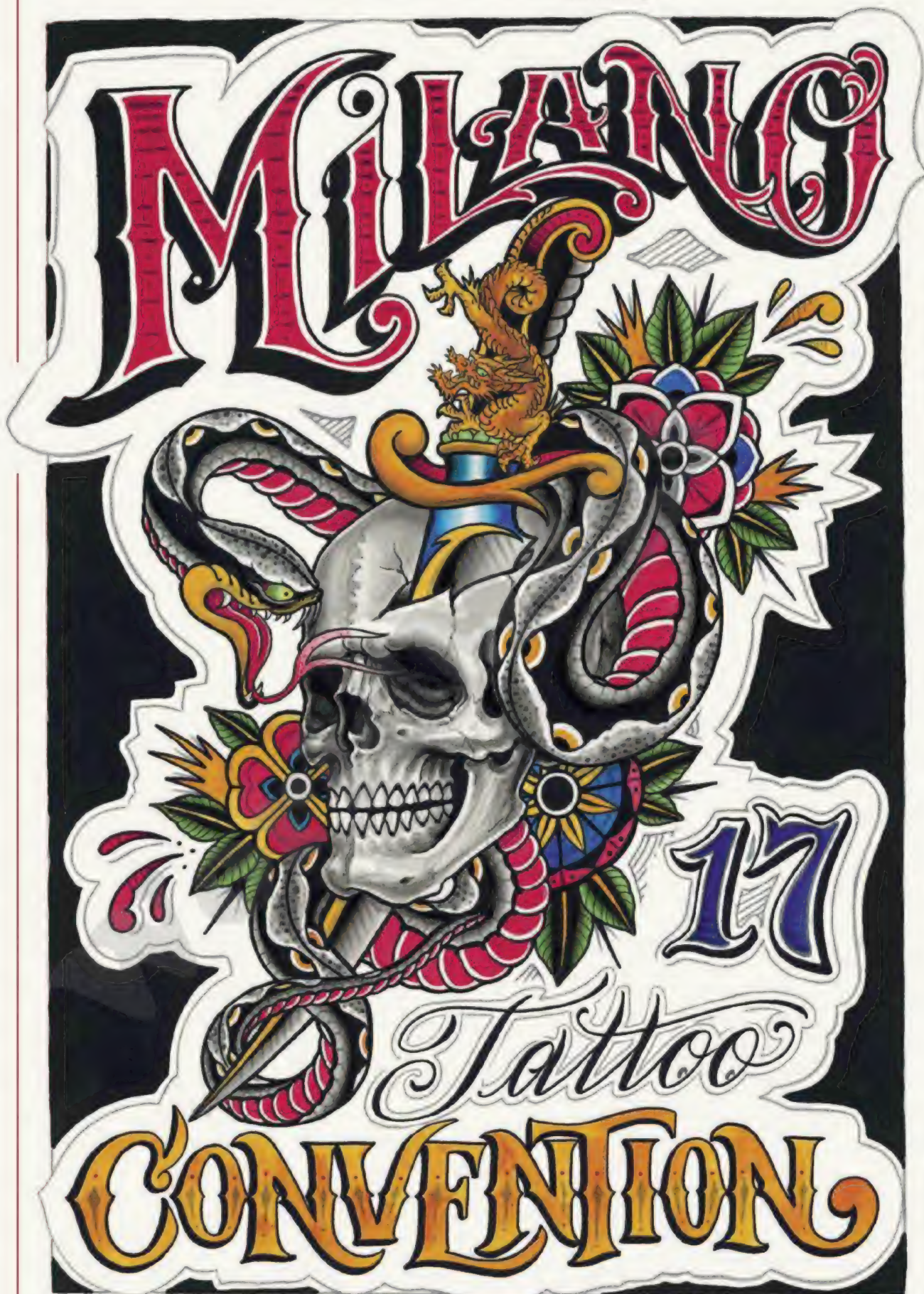
② Tim Biedron
Pioneer Tattoo
Chicago, USA

③ Sebastian Domaschke
Lowbrow Tattoo Parlour
Berlin, Germany



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 Todd Noble
 Civ, Usa
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 Chuey Quintanar
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Carl, Wicked Tattoo, Gothenburg, Sweden



Annie Frenzel, Lowbrow Tattoo Parlour, Berlin, Germany



Ben Hamill, Ink Studios, Parkstone, UK



Danny Boy, Italian Rooster, Rho, Italy



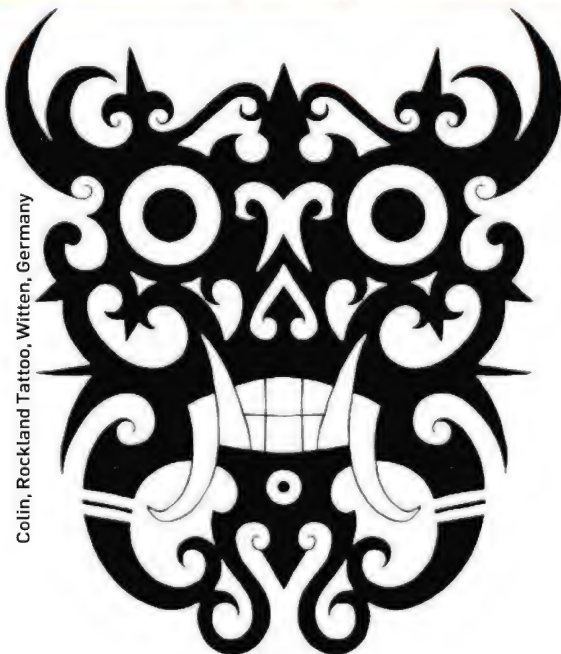
Bill Loika, Tattoo Peter, Amsterdam, Holland



Eva Huber, Tattoo by Eva, Chicopee, USA



Bill Loika, Tattoo Peter, Amsterdam, Holland



Colin, Rockland Tattoo, Witten, Germany



Adam Hathorn, Guru Tattoo, San Diego, USA



Joe Capobianco, Hope Gallery Tattoo, New Haven, USA



Danny Boy, Italian Rooster, Rho, Italy



Bill Loika, Tattoo Peter, Amsterdam, Holland




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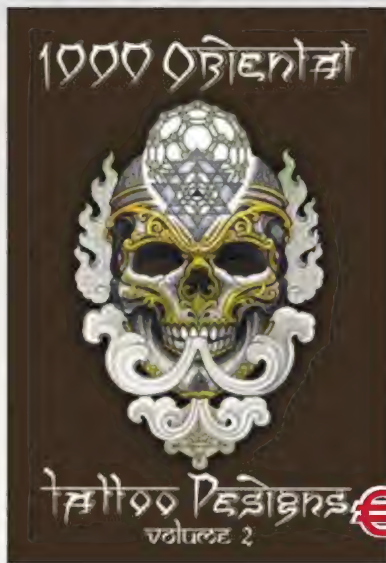


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Ivana Belakova, Bondi Ink, Sydney, Australia



TATTOOWAVE



Gordon Combs, Seventh Son Tattoo, San Francisco, USA



①



②

① Nick Baxter
Nick Baxter Tattoo
Houston, USA

② Nick Chaboya
Seventh Son Tattoo
San Francisco, USA

③ El Monga
Aloha Tattoo
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④ El Carlo
Aloha Tattoo
Barcelona, Spain



③



④



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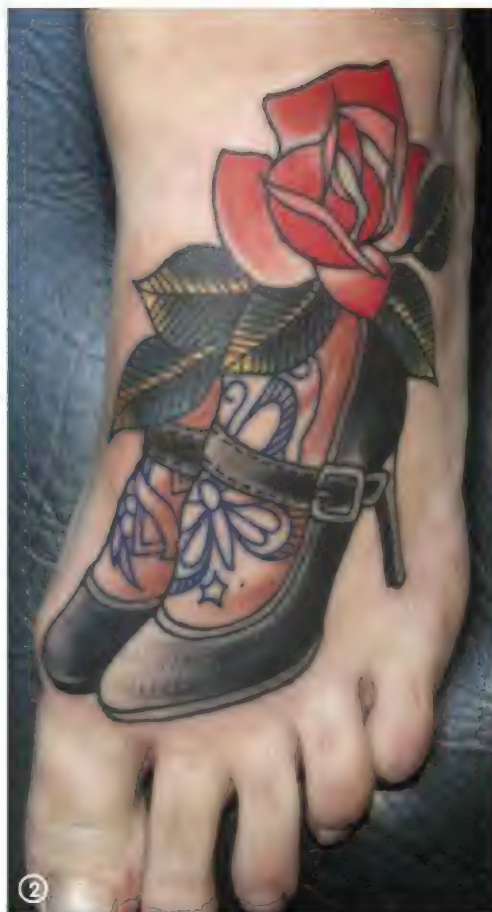
- 5 Andy Barret
Horseshoes & Hand
Grenades Tattoo
Chicopee, USA
- 6 Arianna Settembrino
Skinwear Tattoo
Rimini, Italy
- 7 Edu Cerru
O'Reilly Tattoo
Santa Cruz, USA
- 8 Manekistefy
Adrenalink Tattoo
Marghera, Italy
- 9 Giorgio Landi
Left Hand Tattoo
Acilia, Italy



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② Jess Swaffer
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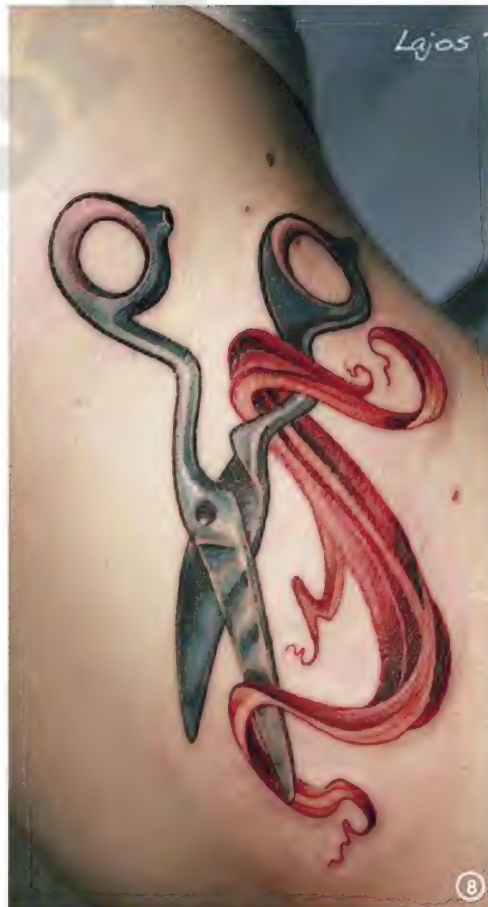
⑤



⑥



⑦



⑧

④ Jason Schroder
Incognito Tattoo
Los Angeles, USA

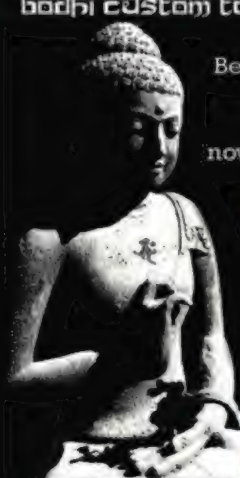
⑤ Davide Andreoli
Italian Rooster
Rho, Italy

⑥ Roman
Artistic Element
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⑦ Matty D'Arienzo
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